



# MOLLY LAMB BOBAK

Life & Work

by Michelle Gewurtz

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## Contents

03

**Biography**

25

**Key Works**

54

**Significance & Critical Issues**

66

**Style & Technique**

76

**Where to See**

84

**Notes**

93

**Glossary**

110

**Sources & Resources**

121

**About the Author**

122

**Copyright & Credits**





# BIOGRAPHY

**Molly Lamb Bobak (1920–2014) is best described as a painter of modern life. Her favourite subjects were vibrant crowd scenes, domestic interiors, and fresh flowers. Born into an unusual but stimulating cultured family, she trained at the Vancouver School of Art and, in 1945, became the only woman to be appointed as an official Canadian war artist. Later that year she married fellow painter Bruno Bobak and, in 1961, the couple settled in Fredericton. A professional artist and teacher, she occupies a secure position as a popular painter with works in major collections across Canada.**

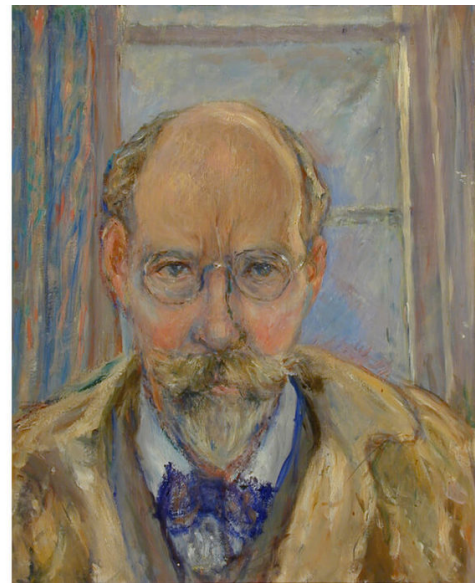


## BOHEMIAN BEGINNINGS

Born into an unconventional family on Lulu Island, near Vancouver, on February 25, 1920,<sup>1</sup> Molly Joan Lamb seemed destined to become an artist. Her childhood home was both a bohemian enclave and a centre for artistic and intellectual gatherings. Her father, British-born mining engineer Harold Mortimer-Lamb (1872–1970), was also a photographer, art critic, and, in the 1920s, an early champion of the Group of Seven. Esteemed Canadian artists including Lawren Harris (1885–1970), J.E.H. MacDonald (1873–1932), Arthur Lismer (1885–1969), Frederick Varley (1881–1969), A.Y. Jackson (1882–1974), Emily Carr (1871–1945), Jack Shadbolt (1909–1998), photographer John Vanderpant (1884–1939), and architect Sam Maclure (1860–1929) frequented the house for lively conversation about the state of contemporary artistic practice.<sup>2</sup>



LEFT: Molly Lamb as a child at Burnaby Lake, British Columbia, 1923, photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb, Royal BC Museum and Archives, Victoria. RIGHT: Harold Mortimer-Lamb, *Self-Portrait*, n.d., oil on canvas, 50.8 x 40.6 cm, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



Although Mortimer-Lamb had settled in British Columbia when he was only sixteen, he was also connected to the international art scene. The artists who gathered at salons he hosted often debated ideas put forward by the influential British critic Roger Fry (1866–1934), such as the importance of form—line, shape, texture, and colour—to the appreciation of Post-Impressionism and other schools of modern art. Fry's daughter Pamela, who had married a Romanian Jew, stayed with the Lambs after her family fled England at the outbreak of the Second World War; she brought her father's Renoir painting with her and hung it over the mantelpiece.<sup>3</sup>

The Lamb family was bourgeois and thoroughly middle class, though also eccentric in structure. Mortimer-Lamb lived with both his wife, Kate (née Lindsay), and his mistress, Mary Williams, Molly's mother.<sup>4</sup> Williams, known to many as "Woody," met Mortimer-Lamb when he was working in Montreal in 1918. His wife was there too but living a secluded life, distraught after the death of their daughter, Dorothy, affectionately known as Dolly. Williams offered her services to the family and began working as their housekeeper. An intimate relationship developed between her and Mortimer-Lamb and, after he suffered a nervous breakdown, he returned to British Columbia with his wife, four sons, and Williams in tow.<sup>5</sup> Molly recalled feeling that her stepmother, Kate, "resented my mother, although she needed her, and always pretended she was a servant."<sup>6</sup> The relationship between Molly's parents continued for another twenty-two years, but she was their only child.<sup>7</sup>



The Mortimer-Lamb family home, West 54th Avenue, Vancouver, photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb, Royal BC Museum and Archives, Victoria.



Mortimer-Lamb accepted a position as secretary of the Mining Association of British Columbia, and the family settled on a farm known as Hill Cottage on the south shore of Burnaby Lake. In her memoir, *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (1978), Molly Lamb Bobak, as she became after her marriage to Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), recounts the happy times she spent surrounded by animals and the vast rural environment: “How much space we had! Meadows, woods, tangled gardens, streams, ponds—and, of course, the deserted old Mervin house, with its dark weathered wood and broken windows.”<sup>8</sup> She recalled creative adventures with a friend as they wrote and performed their own plays.<sup>9</sup>

In 1926 Mortimer-Lamb opened a commercial gallery on Robson Street in Vancouver with photographer John Vanderpant. They exhibited the work of Canadian painters, sculptors, and photographers and became renowned for the progressive images they created. In 1939 Mortimer-Lamb photographed painter Emily Carr in her studio; he was an early champion of her work. The image became one of the most celebrated pictures of the artist, as Molly Lamb Bobak herself remarked: “The famous



LEFT: Emily Carr in her studio, 1939, photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb, Vancouver Art Gallery. RIGHT: John Vanderpant, *Urge*, 1937, gelatin silver print, 25 x 19.6 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



photograph of Emily in her skullcap, leaning forward on her arms, was taken by Dad.”<sup>10</sup> Modelled on Alfred Stieglitz’s (1864–1946) Gallery 291 in New York, Vanderpant Galleries was set up to recognize and promote innovations in both photography and painting. It quickly became a Vancouver centre for music, poetry, art, and serious discussion and was one of the first enterprises on the West Coast to exhibit work by the Group of Seven.<sup>11</sup>

At this time, the family moved to a large house at 1075 West 54th Avenue in Vancouver’s Kerrisdale neighbourhood. As Molly matured, Mortimer-Lamb’s interests became the intellectual core of her life, especially through the regular creative and intellectual salons he hosted at his home. Even after he withdrew from the gallery in March 1927 because of large financial losses, his ties to the contemporary art scene and other cultural milieus in the province remained strong.<sup>12</sup>

Mary Williams also played a pivotal role in her daughter becoming an artist. She provided the emotional heart of Molly’s world, fostering her independent spirit, general disregard for convention, and determination to live and work as she wished. She also passed on her passion for nature and for flowers to her daughter.<sup>13</sup> Molly was enthralled by her mother’s talent for telling stories, especially those about her early days in New Brunswick after she had



immigrated to Canada and the variety of jobs she had held.<sup>14</sup> Williams encouraged Molly's early interest in drawing and painting—a passion that became especially important after Molly began to have difficulty in school owing to her poor eyesight and her general boredom with the curriculum. She suggested her daughter enrol at the Vancouver School of Art.

### ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

The transfer to art school in 1938 was momentous for Molly Lamb. Although she struggled initially and lacked enthusiasm, she discovered her passion for art in her second year when she studied with Jack Shadbolt, whose challenging classes she found “electric.”<sup>15</sup> Unlike her previous teachers, Shadbolt found things to praise in her work and showed her how to improve her drawing technique and composition—skills amply evident in the strong lines and spatial sense in *Untitled (Vancouver)*, 1941.



LEFT: Jack Shadbolt, *Granville Street at Night*, 1946, watercolour, 78.7 x 58.4 cm, private collection. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, *Untitled (Vancouver)*, 1941, oil on canvas, 76.5 x 56 cm, private collection.



As she later wrote, “His encouragement meant a lot to me. Anything could happen from then on; anything was possible with a little skill and a lot of work—Shadbolt introduced me to a great world.”<sup>16</sup> When he showed his students some images by Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), Lamb was ecstatic:

What Cézanne could do with an apple or a glass decanter! One could see layers of watercolour over surfaces and taut blue strokes shattering around the edges, open, moving. Suddenly you weren’t looking at apples or decanters any more, but painting. I almost went crazy.<sup>17</sup>

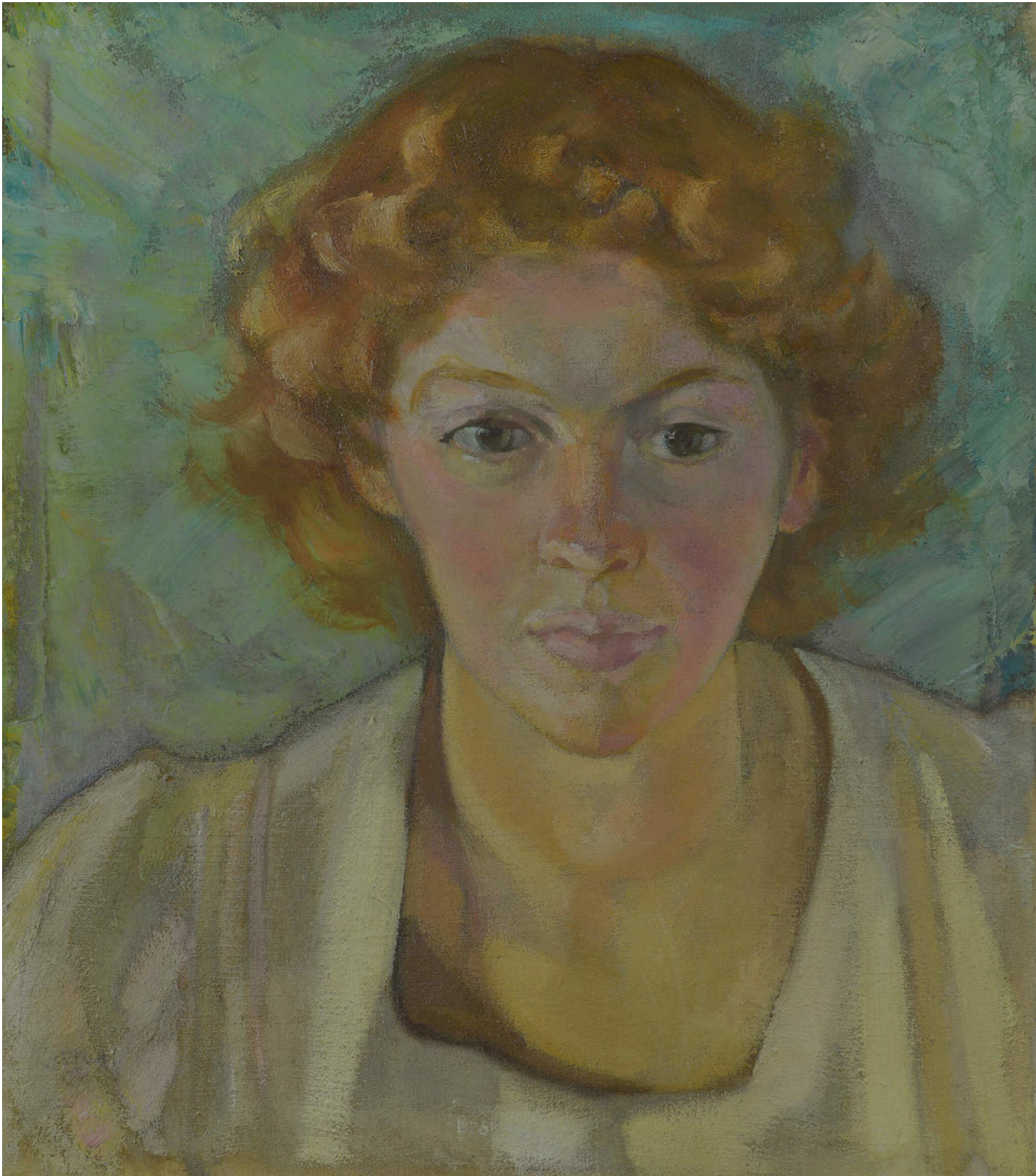
Shadbolt remained a close confidant and mentor to Lamb for decades after she completed her art studies. She was also taught by Jock Macdonald (1897–1960) and Frederick Varley until they left to open the rival British Columbia College of Arts, and she described Varley as a teacher you either totally followed or rejected.<sup>18</sup> She then studied painting with Fred Amess (1909–1970), one of Varley’s former students. She graduated in 1941—and for the rest of her life hardly a day passed when she did not create some artwork, whether sketches or finished canvases. The modernist pull to experiment with abstraction never drew her away from a recognizable representation of the scene before her.

Meanwhile, Lamb’s extended family unit was deteriorating. Mortimer-Lamb’s wife, Kate, died in 1939, and Molly and her half-brothers had all matured and moved out of the family home. After refusing Mortimer-Lamb’s proposal of marriage, Mary Williams relocated to a resort property he purchased for her on Galiano Island, just off the coast near Vancouver. In the summer of 1942 he married Vera Weatherbie (1909–1977), an artist fascinated by mysticism who had been a student at the Vancouver School of Art at the same time as Lamb. Weatherbie also served as Varley’s muse, and he painted several portraits of her while she was his student.<sup>19</sup> During Lamb’s first year at the school, Weatherbie had painted a portrait of her—“good,” Lamb estimated later, “but more like Vera’s gentler character than mine. I was a plumpish kid then with untidy hair, peasant clothes, sad moods . . . but Vera painted me quiet, with no flying ribbons.”<sup>20</sup>



Paul Cézanne, *The Basket of Apples*, 1893, oil on canvas, 65 x 80 cm, Art Institute of Chicago.



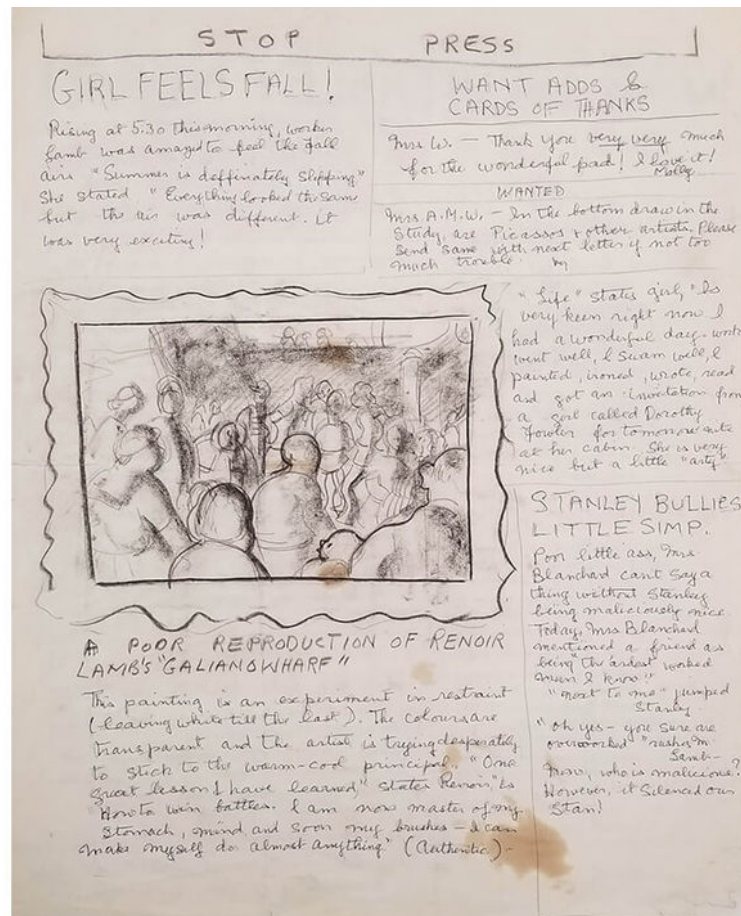


Vera Weatherbie, *Portrait of Molly*, 1938, oil on canvas, 45.8 x 35.5 cm, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

In the summer of 1940, while Lamb was employed as a maid at Yellow Point Lodge on Vancouver Island, she began keeping a diary—a unique document that combined text with caricature drawings. Alternatively titled *The Daily Dishwasher*, *The Daily Chore Girl–Galiano’s Dish Rag*, and *The Daily Dishrag*, the diary had a broadsheet newspaper format. The diary drew inspiration from the work of one of Lamb’s favourite artists as a teenager, Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), the caricaturist who offered social commentary on French political life and whose images her father collected.



While working on Vancouver Island, visiting her mother on Galiano Island and her father in Vancouver, Molly Lamb drew everyone she encountered. She later acknowledged that she started her professional career as a caricaturist, against the advice of Jack Shadbolt.<sup>21</sup> She had a keen eye for the absurd and did not shy away from poking fun at herself, though her caricatures are compassionate and never judgmental.



LEFT: Honoré Daumier, *Une Terrible Rencontre*, 1845, lithograph on newsprint, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, "Stop Press (Coloured Supplement)," July 8, 1940, illustration from *The Daily Chore Girl-Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940, watercolour and pencil on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

## YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!

In the autumn of 1942 Molly Lamb joined the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC). It is not clear what she did after she graduated from the Vancouver School of Art until this point, though she may have tried to work as a painter. An oil portrait, *Figure*, c.1941, survives, depicting a disproportionate but painterly figure seated while holding a basket of fruit. An inscription on the back of the canvas lists her father's address on West 54th Street and a sale price of twenty dollars. Lamb never explained why she decided to join the army, though it seems that once she had enlisted, she regretted the choice almost instantly:



I had a medical and signed papers all afternoon. When it was over the corporal showed me to my room. Bare, bare, bare—even a naked electric light bulb over the brown double bunk which was to be my bed—the top half. I wondered what I'd done. I decided to go out into the grey November air as fast as I could, but to my horror, they wouldn't let me. I had to have a pass, and that was the most shocking thing of all. I finally managed to get one which allowed me to be out until 11 P.M. Mum was in town and we arranged to meet at Scott's Café for supper. I was so upset I couldn't eat and that worried her because I was such a pig. "We'll get you out," she said. . . . Three days later I was so happy, nothing could have got me out of the army.<sup>22</sup>



Molly Lamb, *Canteen, Nijmegen, Holland, 1945*, oil and ink on canvas, 51.2 x 61.1 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

Army life suited the spunky Lamb. Although she practised the usual drills and dutifully completed jobs in the laundry and the canteen assigned to women, she soon found her own interests. "The whole structure of army life is agreeable to a painter," she wrote later in *Canadian Art*, "and everywhere you turn there is something terrific to paint. There is endless material in one barracks alone, though—one could spend hours at the desk in the main hall, drawing the C.W.A.C.s checking in and out, the new recruits, the fatigue girls in their overalls, the orderly officer."<sup>23</sup>

Right from the start, Lamb kept a journal: *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.* (The diary was published in full in 1992, with editorial commentary by Carolyn Gossage, as *Double Duty: Sketches and Diaries of Molly Lamb Bobak, Canadian War Artist.*) Like her earlier Yellow Point Lodge diary, this unique wartime record took a newspaper form, with headlines, editorials, special supplements, and interviews. Through its personal and insightful accounts, it documents Lamb's life in the CWAC between 1942 and June 1945, providing an invaluable record of the Corps' role in the war effort—as seen in *Gas Drill, 1944*.



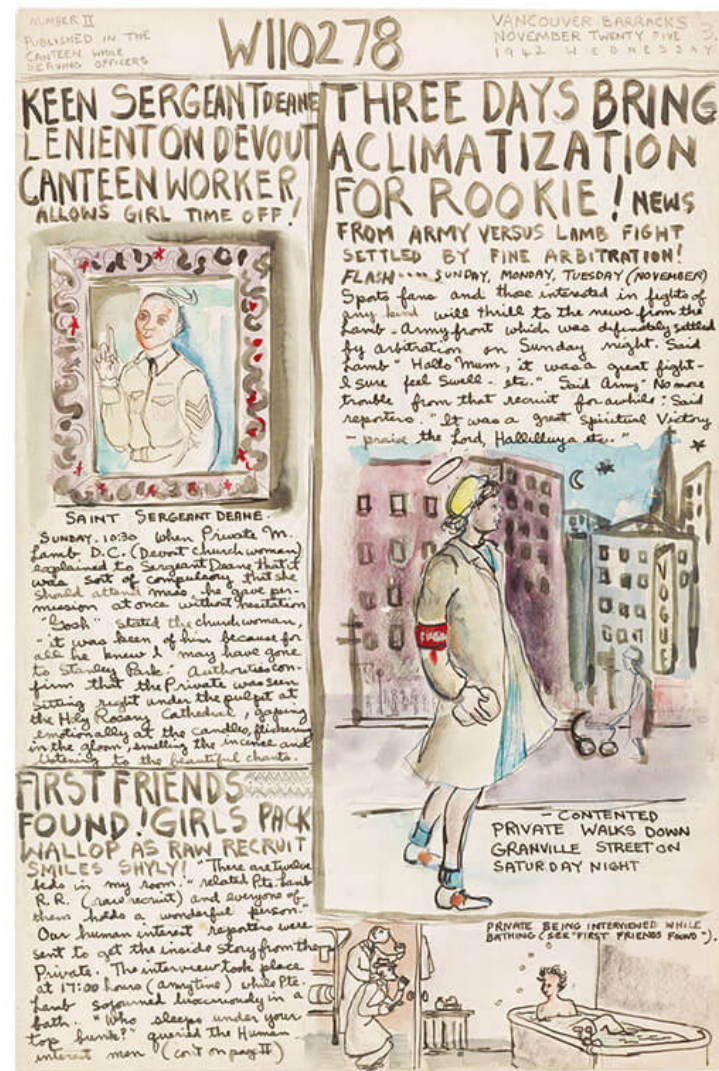


Molly Lamb, *Gas Drill*, 1944, oil on canvas, 68.8 x 86.8 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

The diary contains 147 folios, with close to fifty single-sheet sketches interleaved among its pages.<sup>24</sup> The opening captures the humour with which Lamb chronicled life in the army: "Girl Takes Drastic Step! 'Your [sic] in the Army Now' as Medical Test Okayed."

The army had a profound effect on Lamb, both personally and professionally. "I had a good war,"<sup>25</sup> she said, and her *Self-Portrait*, 1942-43, reveals one of her lighter moments as she joyfully carries a case of beer through the barracks. As soon as she enlisted, she began to travel. From the barracks in Vancouver she went to Vermilion, Alberta, for basic training. As a private and later an officer, she worked in Alberta and Quebec, and was then stationed in Ontario. As the army came to recognize her abilities as a graphic artist, her superiors sent her to a drafting course in Toronto.





LEFT: Molly Lamb, "Molly Lamb Enters the Army," November 22, 1942, illustration from W110278: *The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*, pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, "Sergeant Deane," November 25, 1942, illustration from W110278: *The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*, pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

Backed by some of her father's influential friends, Lamb began to lobby constantly for the coveted designation of an official war artist. While she was in Toronto she reconnected with A.Y. Jackson, who took an interest in her wartime diary and appreciated the women's perspective it provided on the war. As one of the advisers to the Canadian War Artists Selection Committee (CWASC), his support was critical to her success.<sup>26</sup> Jackson also introduced her to Charles Comfort (1900-1994), Frances Loring (1887-1968), and Florence Wyle (1881-1968).<sup>27</sup> H.O. McCurry (1889-1964), another of her father's friends, was director of the National Gallery of Canada and head of the CWASC. On Jackson's advice, Lamb travelled to Ottawa to meet with him and show him her drawings. Afterwards, she continued to barrage him with letters and with visits, even hitchhiking on one occasion.<sup>28</sup> To help her obtain art supplies, he allowed her to purchase them from the National Gallery at the low educational rate.<sup>29</sup>



In the summer of 1943 Lamb was reassigned to Ottawa, where she was tasked with drawing the daily work at the Trades Training offices and allowed time to document the activities of her fellow CWACs. As she noted in her memoir: "I never stopped drawing. The CWACs in the bathroom, or the dining hall, or on parade, or something."<sup>30</sup> Next she went to the Canadian Army Trades School in Hamilton, Ontario, where she designed posters and Christmas cards.

Lamb's success as an artist moved beyond the army: that same summer the Art Gallery of Toronto (now the Art Gallery of Ontario) purchased three of her CWAC drawings, and in August, *New World* magazine published six more, praising her work for its wit and powers of observation. In March 1944, *Meal Parade, Hamilton Trades School*, n.d., tied for second prize in the National Gallery's Canadian Army Art Show—a competition in which the man she would later marry, Bruno Bobak, then overseas, took top honours.

Her drawing *Dinner Parade*, n.d., also received an honourable mention. She later remarked that winning second prize at the National Gallery exhibition helped her and Bobak get appointed as war artists.<sup>31</sup> The following month she was reassigned to Toronto to work on sets and costumes for the Canadian Army Show, a theatrical revue. By this point she had McCurry's full support in her bid to become an official war artist, and he suggested that she focus on producing more crowd scenes of the CWAC.

Sometime in 1943 or 1944, Molly Lamb met Pegi Nicol MacLeod (1904–1949), who divided her time between Fredericton and New York. Though MacLeod was politically opposed to the war, in 1944 the National Gallery of Canada commissioned her to document women's participation in the war effort in New Brunswick. Her paintings of Canadian servicewomen in the CWAC, the RCAF Women's Division, and the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRENS) participating in drills and parades or cleaning, cooking, washing up, and serving meals are brash and colourful, but her portrayal lacks the jovial camaraderie bubbling through Lamb's depictions of life in the barracks. It is possible that these two artists met when Lamb visited New York in February 1944, but the supplement "New York by Thumb," which concludes the first volume of Lamb's wartime diary, does not mention MacLeod. While there, however, Lamb visited the Art Students League, where she discussed her diary and was advised to show it to editors at *Life* magazine. She did, but nothing came of this meeting.<sup>32</sup>



Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Bath House*, 1946, oil on canvas, 76.6 x 61.4 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

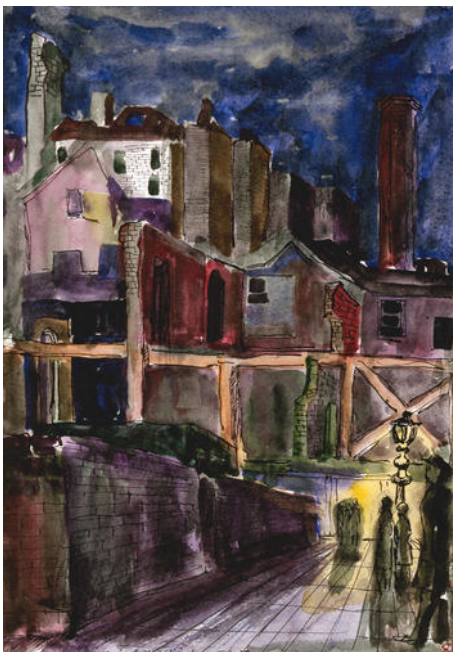




LEFT: Molly Lamb, *The Base Post Office, Lot, Belgium, n.d.*, carbon pencil on paper, 25.3 x 35.7 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, *CWACs Sorting Mail, n.d.*, oil on canvas, 60 x 76.3 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

Finally, as the war neared its end in Europe, Lamb received the long-sought appointment from the Canadian War Artists Selection Committee<sup>33</sup> as an official war artist—the only woman to have this designation. Other women artists who were not in the armed services, including Paraskeva Clark (1898–1986) and Alma Duncan (1917–2004), were never considered, although they were commissioned by the National Gallery of Canada to represent aspects of the war effort on the home front.<sup>34</sup>

Women were not allowed on the active war front, and once the hostilities ceased, Lamb was transferred to London, England, in June 1945, six weeks after Victory in Europe (VE) Day. Over the next few months, her position as a war artist gave her invaluable professional experience and opportunities.



LEFT: Molly Lamb, *Ruins, Holborn Street, London, 1945*, watercolour, ink, and graphite on paper, 35.4 x 25.3 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, *Bremen Ruins at Night, 1945*, charcoal and ink on paper, 30.5 x 45.7 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

Asked to document the aftermath of the war, Lamb shared a studio at Fairfax House in High Holborn, London, with Bruno Bobak, whom she met for the first time. She also encountered several other Canadian artists—Alex Colville (1920–2013), Will Ogilvie (1901–1989), George Campbell Tinning (1910–1996),



Lawren P. Harris (1910–1994), and Tom MacDonald (1908–1978)—and, over the following decades, she remained in touch with many of them. Within a few weeks she travelled with her own car and driver to the Netherlands, France, and Germany, where she sketched what she saw, from burned and bombed-out towns—such as in *Ruins*, *Holborn Street, London*, or *Bremen Ruins at Night*, both 1945—to celebrations and everyday life.

“They were six of the richest and most exciting weeks of my life,”<sup>35</sup> she recalled. Later, this prolific artist worked some of this material into finished canvases—for example, her stunning portrait *Private Roy, Canadian Women’s Army Corps*, 1946—but she never documented the tragic scenes she had observed in concentration camps. The Canadian War Museum holds 114 of her works.



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Victory Japan Celebrations*, 1945, oil and watercolour on paper, 44.1 x 60.8 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

#### POST-ARMY CAREER

Bruno Bobak initially ignored Lamb and resented her presence in the studio, but they gradually warmed to each other. Later, she described their relationship without embellishment: “We had a good time in London, then came back to Toronto and got married” later in 1945.<sup>36</sup>



They settled in Ottawa, but in 1946, once Molly was pregnant with their son, the army discharged her for “medical reasons.” At Molly’s urging, they moved west to Galiano Island. There the two artists tried to make a living by teaching, painting, and taking odd jobs, including working for little pay at the sawmill owned by Molly’s mother, Mary Williams, at Retreat Cove.

In 1947 Bruno Bobak began teaching at the Vancouver School of Art, and the family once again relocated. In Vancouver, he built a family house, assisted by his architect friends Ron Thom (1923–1986) and Douglas Shadbolt (1925–2002).



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak and Bruno Bobak, 1946, photograph by George Rutherford.



RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak and Bruno Bobak in their Peters Road house, designed by Doug Shadbolt, n.d., photographer unknown.

Although their circumstances were improving, Molly, now with two small children, Alexander (Sasha) and Anny, found little time to paint. She did draw, however, in moments between her domestic duties and her job teaching night school at the Vancouver School of Art. So successful was she as an instructor that she was also asked to deliver art lessons across the province, where again her classes proved popular even in remote locations in the interior. She also demonstrated an aptitude for radio and television broadcasting—even in art school, she had auditioned for CJOR radio plays in Vancouver—and she proved so capable in this medium that several of her art lessons were broadcast on radio and television.<sup>37</sup>

As an artist, however, Lamb Bobak felt increasingly frustrated with her slow, “stagnant” progress. She described her art from this time as “too subjective” or representational, the result of her obligation as a war artist to record scenes as realistically as possible. “When the war came,” she explained later, “I was really illustrating what I saw.”<sup>38</sup> She consulted her mentor Jack Shadbolt, who suggested she return to thinking about “the formal language of painting,” focusing on line, shape, and colour rather than representational themes and her responses to them.<sup>39</sup> This advice provided the corrective she needed. Now, as a mature painter working on the periphery of a Canadian art world split between Toronto and Montreal, she began to experiment and cultivate her own personal aesthetic.



### A LIFE IN EUROPE

In 1950 Jacques Maritain, a French philosopher who was also the Vatican ambassador to the United States, first encountered Molly Lamb Bobak's work during a visit to Vancouver. He was obviously impressed with her art: he bought one of her paintings and recommended her for a French government scholarship.

The Bobaks travelled to Europe with their two young children and, for a year, lived in France. That experience, particularly the time they spent in Paris, was significant for Lamb Bobak, exposing her directly to the work of modernist painters including Paul Cézanne, Henri Matisse (1869–1954), and Pablo Picasso (1881–1973). She also spent time with Canadian artist Joseph Plaskett (1918–2014) at his home in Paris.<sup>40</sup>



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *New Housing Project*, 1956, oil on canvas, 88.8 x 127.4 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Saint Ives Train*, 1958, oil on canvas, 66.5 x 86.6 cm, Art Gallery of Sudbury.

Cézanne's influence can be seen in Lamb Bobak's geometrically ordered composition *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951, and the colourful subdivision, *New Housing Project*, 1956. This concern with pattern shows up again in later paintings such as *The Saint Ives Train*, 1958, but the increasing use of colour in the repeated designs is also due to Bruno Bobak.

In interviews, Lamb Bobak always insisted that Bruno was a different kind of painter and that his advice to her was restricted to technical matters. Their work from this period, however, suggests that although the Bobaks developed independently as painters, Bruno's influence was formative. Bruno's *Primroses*, c.1960, demonstrates a similar approach to Molly's floral paintings using watercolours. All through the 1950s Lamb Bobak's approach to painting matured as she sought to unify formal painterly concerns (for example, texture, composition, and line) with those dictated by her preferred subject matter—crowds, floral still-life paintings, landscapes, and urban scenes.



From 1957 until 1961 the Bobaks spent much of their time in Europe, supported by several grants from the Canada Council for the Arts to work in England and Europe. While in Norway, Lamb Bobak was loaned the studio once used by Edvard Munch (1863–1944).<sup>41</sup> She developed an interest in printmaking and intended to use her time in

Norway taking classes, though it is unclear whether this ambition was fulfilled. With London as their base, the Bobaks travelled in England and on the continent, while Lamb Bobak sketched on paper every day. Some of these drawings served as studies for subsequent oil paintings and a few prints, including scenes of Florence and other European cities. Wherever they travelled, Lamb Bobak was influenced by the changing scenes around her.



LEFT: Bruno Bobak, *Primroses*, c.1960, watercolour on paper, 17.8 x 25.3 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Cornflowers*, 1950, oil on canvas, 45.7 x 60.9 cm, private collection.

In Cornwall, England, the family settled in a village called Lelant, and they quickly became friendly with the artistic community in St. Ives. They met many English painters and sculptors, including Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975). Lamb Bobak lamented what she saw as the impact of the New York School on these talented English artists.<sup>42</sup> For several years after they eventually settled in Fredericton, in 1960, the Bobaks returned to Europe every summer, immersing themselves in modern art and renewing their contacts, particularly with artists and curators living in England.

Back in Canada, H.O. McCurry and then Alan Jarvis (1915–1972), the directors of the National Gallery of Canada, and R.H. Hubbard (1916–1989), the gallery's first curator of Canadian art, were impressed with Lamb Bobak's work from these years, and they purchased some of her paintings—for example, *Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire*, 1951.

In 1953 and 1960 they included her artworks in the Canadian section at the Bienal de São Paulo in Brazil, and in 1957 and 1959 she appeared in the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Biennials in Ottawa and other cities.





Molly Lamb Bobak, *Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire*, 1951, oil, gouache, and watercolour on cardboard, 60.6 x 81.3 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

### LIFE IN FREDERICTON

While living in Norway in 1960, Bruno Bobak was offered a one-year position as artist-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick, and the family moved to Fredericton that autumn.

Once this contract was completed, they returned to London for a brief stay, but then settled permanently in Fredericton so Bruno could become director of the University Art Centre. They both taught at the university.<sup>43</sup> As in British Columbia, Lamb Bobak also organized classes throughout the province and on television, becoming a well-known and inspiring instructor. As a couple, they gradually became the centre of Fredericton's art scene—the most established artists in the city—with strong connections to artists in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. They exhibited frequently at the University Art Centre and the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, which had opened to the public in 1959. Lamb Bobak received several commissions and became known for her paintings of official gatherings at the Legislature, City Hall, and other civic and public spaces not only in Fredericton but also throughout the Maritime provinces.



The move to Fredericton supplied Lamb Bobak with new subject matter, and her work began to reflect a celebratory attitude toward urban landscapes and especially the people who populated them. "I think that it is an interest I have had ever since I was a kid," she said. "I simply love gatherings, mingling. . . . It's like little ants crawling, the sort of insignificance and yet the beauty of people all getting together."<sup>44</sup>

Her crowd scenes show people gathered in community spaces, often waving flags, cheering on sports teams, or in parades or commencement ceremonies. As her career progressed, she became increasingly concerned with movement and rhythm in her scenes of parades and sporting events—for example, *Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969.

The fascination is foremost in her sketches and images of the two-day official visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, to New Brunswick in July 1976. As she followed the Queen's itinerary, she captured in rapidly drawn charcoal and ink impressions in her sketchbook the joyful crowds that gathered to welcome the royal couple.<sup>45</sup>



LEFT: Queen Elizabeth and Premier Richard B. Hatfield, July 15, 1976, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Fredericton. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977, oil on canvas, 101.3 x 121.2 cm, New Brunswick Art Bank.



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Legislative Ball*, 1986, oil on canvas, 101.5 x 121.5 cm, private collection, Montreal. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *On the Beach*, 1983, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 101.6 cm, private collection, Calgary.

She annotated these sketches with extensive notes that she used later when she created around fifty oil paintings documenting the visit. These paintings, of which the best known is *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977, convey a sense of vitality and movement while also positioning the viewer as part of the assembled crowd—an effect she achieved by using a ground-level perspective. It differs in approach from many of Lamb Bobak's other scenes where the sense of movement is accentuated through colour and a perspective that places the viewer at a distance—as in *The Legislative Ball*, 1986, or *On the Beach*,



1983. Joseph Plaskett, a painter also known for his flowers and interiors, described Lamb Bobak in these words: "Art is her life and her expression. Life is celebrated . . . the drama is enacted."<sup>46</sup>

## MATURITY

As Molly Lamb Bobak gained in maturity, she struck a balance in her work between subject matter and her own formal yet painterly style. She did not abandon line, colour, and texture, but she unified these concerns with her subjects so that the themes were always recognizable. Although she focused on crowd scenes, flower paintings, and interior still lifes, she also produced landscapes and urban scenes. Most were representational in style, though in her seascape *Black Rocks, Caesaria*, 1985, painted in Israel, she came closest to abstraction. Her paintings of flowers, such as *Wild Asters*, n.d., are in many respects similar to her paintings of crowds of people: the groupings have a sense of spontaneity and the elements can be arranged in an infinite variety of ways. Both genres pose a range of challenges for an artist, but Lamb Bobak found the difficulties stimulating. As she explained in *Wild Flowers of Canada* (1978), she found inspiration in flowers.

Art historian David P. Silcox notes in his foreword to the volume that the narrative and the flowers alike serve as a double self-portrait. In the opening chapter, "Roots," for example, Lamb Bobak recounts stories her mother, Mary Williams, told her about her life in New Brunswick soon after she arrived in Canada. These stories, along with facts about her parents and recollections of her early life on Burnaby Lake, are illustrated by a freely composed watercolour of geraniums: "My mother never cared much for geraniums—she planted phlox and night-scented stock and asters and mignonette. I first came to love geraniums after seeing them in a Cézanne painting—he did a few on a window ledge in those simple earthenware flower pots the French still make."<sup>47</sup> The flowers in her paintings are always natural, as though freshly picked and casually dropped into a simple container. "I have an aversion to florists' bouquets with their bows, coloured sprays, and wired pompons," she wrote.<sup>48</sup>



LEFT: Paul Cézanne, *Geraniums*, 1888-90, watercolour over graphite on laid paper, 30.5 x 28.6 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, "Geraniums," 1977, colour illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978).



In contrast to her flower paintings and her crowd scenes, Lamb Bobak's interiors, such as *Pub, Sloane Square*, 1970, have fewer animating qualities. They are quiet, static, and serene, depicting spaces with which the artist had some sort of personal relationship. Curator Cindy Richmond observes that they



all had psychological significance for their creator, some connection to particular emotions or experience.<sup>49</sup> Lamb Bobak's paintings of pub interiors from her time in London in the 1950s and 1960s suggest a convivial atmosphere but also strike a sombre note, as the spaces are old and dimly lit, with hints of foreboding—*Warm Pub*, n.d., for example.



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Pub, Sloane Square*, 1970, oil on Masonite, 120 x 100 cm, Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Warm Pub*, n.d., 61 x 76.2 cm, private collection.

In a later work, *Interior with Moroccan Carpet*, 1991, Lamb Bobak produced a hybrid, combining a domestic interior with a still life of a vase of flowers. In this painting, the lamp, sofa, table, vase of blue flowers, and the patterned Moroccan carpet are each recognizable, but the painting as a whole tends toward abstraction. The composition is alive with energy.

As she explained to curator Joan Murray, "I have always been interested in informal movement—blowing wild flowers, parades, protests, crowds on the street, crowds anywhere; just as long as they turn into painting space in my head."<sup>50</sup>

In 1973 Lamb Bobak was elected a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, and in 1995 she was honoured with the Order of Canada, along with Bruno Bobak. In 2002 she became one of the early inductees to the Order of New Brunswick. Despite her poor eyesight, she continued to paint daily and exhibited her work successfully in commercial galleries in Fredericton, Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa. In 1993 the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina organized a major touring exhibition and catalogue of her work, which went to the National Gallery of Canada, Memorial University Art Gallery in St. John's, and the Beaverbrook Art Gallery. She always maintained strong links with Canadian artists she met during her early years in the West and with other war artists from the Second World War. In addition, she made new contacts through her frequent exhibitions in the commercial art world and her participation on numerous juries.



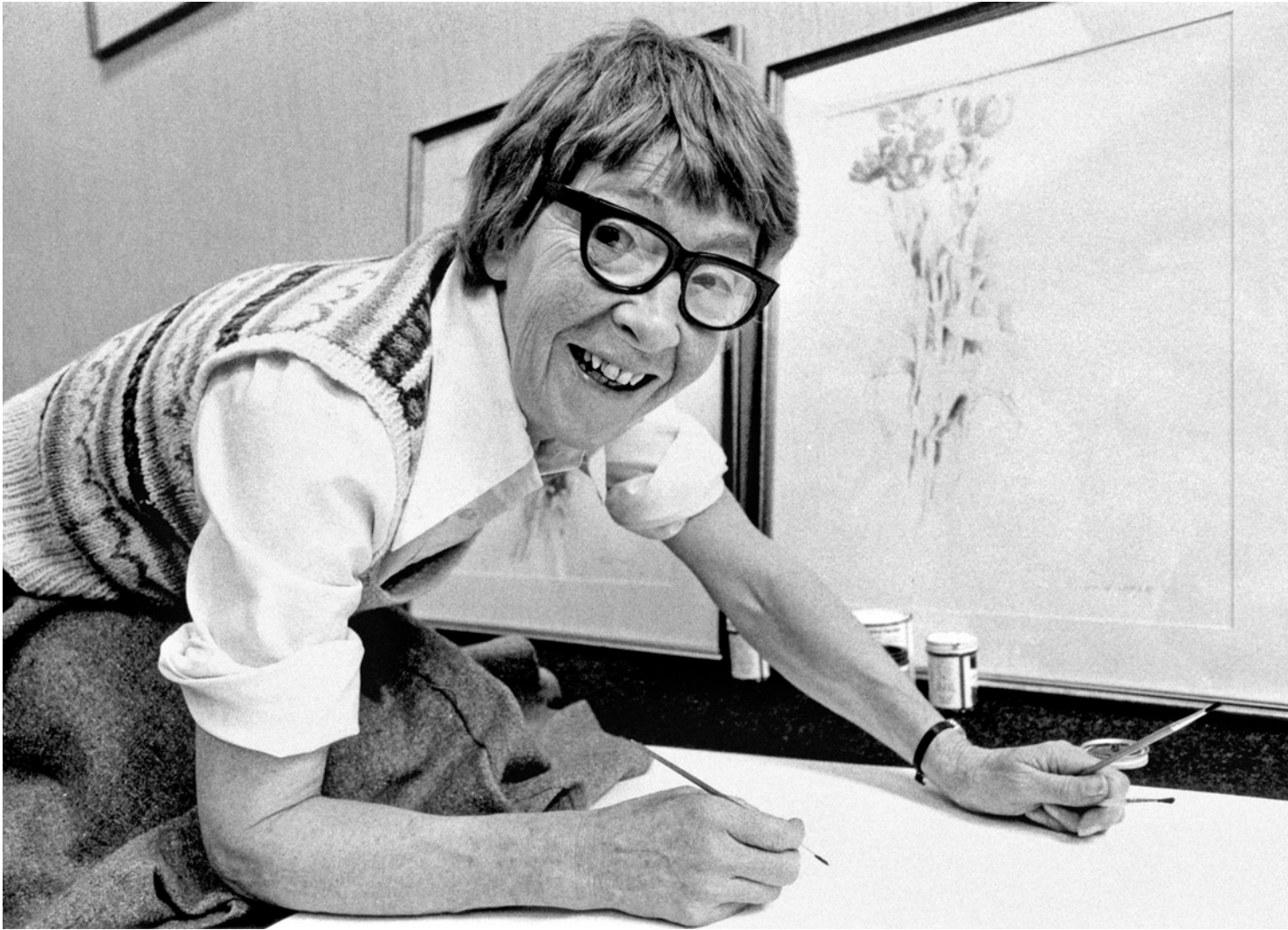


Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Great Kite Festival No. 2*, n.d., oil on board, 28.6 x 43.8 cm, private collection.

Throughout her life, Lamb Bobak continued to be a prolific and successful painter, an occasional printmaker and illustrator, and an influential instructor. She balanced this professional life with her family duties, filling the house she and her husband bought in Fredericton with beautiful old (yet inexpensive) furniture and ignoring many of the accepted home-decorating conventions. "Mom and Dad were part of a bigger world than their family," their daughter, Anny Scoones, remembers. "For their art to be honest and free and worthwhile, they had to be open to more than just being maternal or paternal."<sup>51</sup>

In the late 1990s failing eyesight forced Lamb Bobak to curtail her activities. After her husband's death in 2012, she moved into an assisted-living facility for veterans in Fredericton and passed away on March 2, 2014, not long after celebrating her ninety-fourth birthday. She was the last surviving member of the thirty-two official Canadian war artists and a pioneering Canadian artist who, in the second half of the twentieth century, succeeded outside the dominant Toronto-Ottawa-Montreal-Quebec City corridor.





Molly Lamb Bobak, November 1978, photograph by Erik Christensen.





Molly Lamb Bobak has been well recognized for her lively sketches and paintings of army life during and immediately after the Second World War. Her finest works—her paintings of modern life rendered in a style uniquely her own—deserve far more attention than they have received. Her innovative crowd scenes, delicate wildflowers, and complex interior compositions all testify to her skill in capturing the scene around her wherever she lived. As a professional artist, she experimented with different styles and worked in many media—oil and watercolour, drawing, printmaking, and illustration.



## UNTITLED (VANCOUVER) 1941



Molly Lamb, *Untitled (Vancouver)*, 1941  
Oil on canvas, 76.5 x 56 cm  
Private collection



*Untitled (Vancouver)* is an early work by Molly Lamb that portrays a group of people in a public space—a theme that became central to her work later in her career. This urban landscape presents a Vancouver residential street at night. The sidewalk is illuminated by a single gas lamp that throws light on a cluster of people walking past a large red-brick house. Close observation reveals that all the figures are women, some walking alone and others together. One woman appears to be collecting wood, presumably to light a fire inside the nearby house whose windows are brightly lit.

Completed just as Lamb was finishing her studies at the Vancouver School of Art, this composition resembles streetscapes by her teacher and mentor Jack Shadbolt (1909–1998)—for example, his linocut print *Toronto from My Window*, 1933. Shadbolt taught his students to consider the structural relationships among shapes as the key element in a composition. Lamb’s concern with form is evident in *Untitled (Vancouver)*: strong outlines and firm interior lines define both the shape of the buildings and the spaces within the nightscape.

In the 1930s Shadbolt was influenced by the socially conscious work of Mexican muralist Diego Rivera (1886–1957) and the American Regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975), and he passed this interest on to Lamb. As a realist painting, *Untitled (Vancouver)* presents a street populated by women, most likely on their way home from work. As a result, it carries a social comment regarding the lived experience of women during the war years.

In its detail and composition, this painting attests to Lamb’s burgeoning powers of observation in her art. “I really observed things . . . [the paintings] have got the feel of the place and the feel of the time,” she told curator Cindy Richmond. “I am really pleased that happened, because it is the kind of observation I really care about . . . I was becoming more myself.”<sup>1</sup>



Thomas Hart Benton, *Island Hay*, 1945, oil on tin, 13.3 x 17.1 cm, private collection.



## W110278: THE PERSONAL WAR RECORDS OF PRIVATE LAMB, M. 1942-45



Molly Lamb, W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45

Pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper

Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa



Molly Lamb's wartime diary is unique in its chronicling of army life, particularly from a woman's point of view. Some critics have referred to it as a self-portrait, though Lamb penned it in the third person and credited drawn representations of herself to photojournalists. Unlike the purely textual diaries of fellow war artists Charles Comfort (1900-1994) and George Campbell Tinning (1910-1996), *W110278* combines words with imagery to produce an illustrated document of her experiences. Lamb kept her journal between November 1942, when she enlisted in the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC), and June 1945, when she was appointed a lieutenant in the Canadian Army Historical Section. With her promotion, she was able to receive the official war artist designation from the Canadian War Artists Selection Committee in Ottawa, chaired by H.O. McCurry (1889-1964), the director of the National Gallery of Canada.

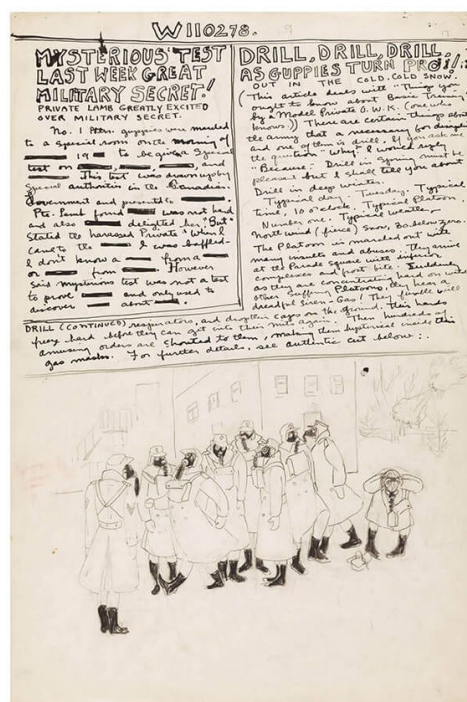
Written in the form of a newspaper, complete with editorials, special supplements, interviews, and catchy banner headlines, the diary is similar to an earlier record, *The Daily Chore Girl-Galiano's Dish Rag*, which Lamb produced in the summer of 1940 while she was living and working at a resort on Galiano Island. She had a keen eye for the absurd, using humour, hyperbole, and caricature effectively to document daily life.

Although *W110278* was originally created as a record and for Lamb's own amusement, it is clear it was also meant for an audience, and its value was recognized by others.

A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974), then an adviser to the Canadian War Records Committee, felt that it demonstrated Lamb's potential as a war artist. Some of the entries were later reworked for various purposes—for example, the sketch "Gas Drill, Vermilion,"<sup>1</sup> is preparatory material for the finished canvas, *Gas Drill*, 1944.

This preliminary drawing illustrates an article entitled "Things you ought to know about Basic Training" and bears the caption "Drill, Drill, Drill as Guppies Turn Pro! Out in the Cold, Cold snow." Here Lamb describes in detail one of the activities a "guppy," or new recruit, was required to carry out in basic training: drills. She describes a drill in winter at this Alberta base, in thirty-below temperatures and fierce winds, where the guppies are bombarded with insults as they struggle with their masks and the sirens blare.

The comedic effect of her drawings, coupled with the often self-deprecating text, creates a document that is deeply funny. An early entry from December 1,



LEFT: Molly Lamb, "Gas Drill, Vermilion," December 1942, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*, pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, "Private Lamb Has a Quiet Afternoon in the Canteen," December 1, 1942, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*, pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.







1942, produced not long after Lamb joined the CWACs, is titled "Private Lamb Has a Quiet Afternoon in the Canteen." The irony of the title contrasts with the image of the self-described clumsy artist struggling to juggle crockery behind a crowded lunch counter. *W110278* relays a shared experience, as Lamb's self-portraits and portraits come to represent the CWACs as a group. Her colleagues agreed: "When the war is history and army careers a past," the June 1945 issue of their *News Letter* stated, "Lieut. Lamb's scrapbook should be made available to all CWACs that they may live through its pages. It is our story, told by one of us as it was lived by us all."<sup>2</sup> In 2015 Library and Archives Canada fulfilled this request by digitizing Lamb's diary in its entirety to mark the seventieth anniversary of her appointment as Canada's only official woman war artist.



## RUINS OF EMMERICH, GERMANY 1945



Molly Lamb, *Ruins of Emmerich, Germany*, 1945  
Watercolour, ink, and graphite on paper, 35.5 x 25.4 cm  
Canadian War Museum, Ottawa



As an official war artist, Molly Lamb was given the opportunity to travel and document the European landscape immediately after the cessation of hostilities. In the summer of 1945, after three weeks working in a studio in London, she was sent to Europe with a car and driver for six weeks and given complete freedom to travel where she liked. “They were,” she said, “six of the richest and most exciting weeks of my life.”<sup>1</sup>

For the most part, the subjects Lamb chose to depict differed little from those she had earlier portrayed in Canada—generally peaceful scenes on Canadian Women’s Army Corps bases in Holland and Belgium, for example. She did, however, document the devastating aftermath of the war in several sketches and watercolours of bombed-out cities and towns—as in the charred landscape in *Ruins of Emmerich, Germany*. Always, though, she maintained a psychological distance from her subjects. In this work, a lone woman is shown at the centre of the scene of a devastated churchyard. She is not rendered in any detail, so it is impossible to identify her. Is she a townswoman or a member of a relief organization? The graffiti scrawled on the wall refers to the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division, which was given the nickname “the Water Rats” by General Bernard Montgomery, and had fought at Emmerich.<sup>2</sup> Her use of ink, graphite, and charcoal lends the scene a dark quality that suggests the violence of war and the terrible destruction in cities before they slowly began to rebuild.

Similarly, her watercolour *Ruins, Holborn Street, London*, 1945, depicts bombed-out homes in the British capital. The dark street scene is illuminated by a single gaslight as a small group of women gathers below to look at the remains of a brick wall. Lamb’s sketch *Wilhelmshaven at Night* and the painting *German Children in Bremen, Germany*, both 1945, attest to the human casualties of war. In the sketch, three army officers take stock of the ruined town. In the watercolour, a large group of children gather around an army officer. Have they been orphaned by war, or are they seeking food and shelter? Scenes of ruined towns depicted at nightfall are the only way Lamb portrayed violent subject matter.



LEFT: Molly Lamb, *Wilhelmshaven at Night*, 1945, charcoal on paper, 30.6 x 45.7 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, *German Children in Bremen, Germany*, 1945, watercolour, ink, and charcoal on paper, 25.4 x 35.4 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.



Although she visited the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and saw stacks of bones there, she felt she could not depict scenes of such personal horror—in contrast to her colleague Alex Colville (1920–2013) with his *Bodies in a Grave, Belsen*, 1946.<sup>3</sup> A few other war artists, notably Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), whom she was soon to marry, reacted the same way Lamb did. Although she was moved by the unspeakable traumas and devastation resulting from the war, she refrained from rendering them in any graphic way.



## PRIVATE ROY, CANADIAN WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS 1946

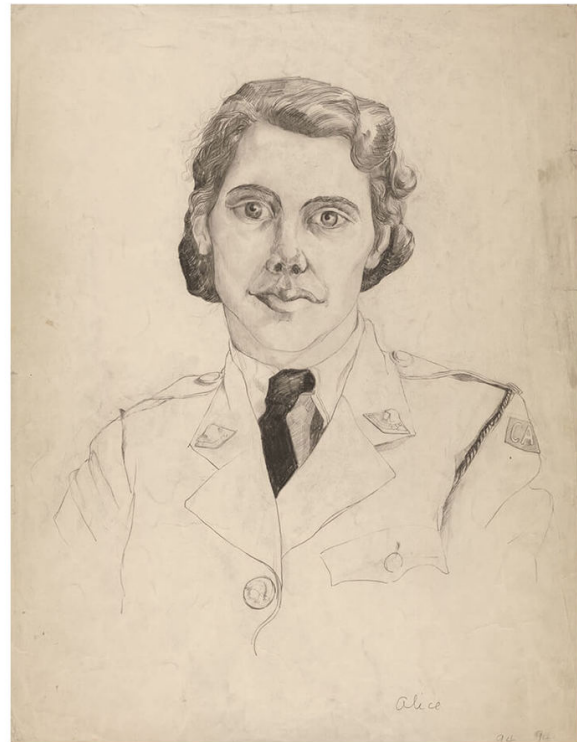


Molly Lamb Bobak, *Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps*, 1946  
Oil on fibreboard, 76.4 x 60.8 cm  
Canadian War Museum, Ottawa



Molly Lamb Bobak's portraits of specific individuals, in contrast to generalized figures, date primarily to her years in the military or shortly thereafter. *Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps* features a black woman who, with arms folded, stares down at the counter in the canteen, where she likely worked.<sup>1</sup> Lamb Bobak represents a resolute but lonely-looking woman whose downcast gaze and folded arms emphasize what Charmaine A. Nelson has identified as Private Roy's sense of alienation.<sup>2</sup> This stands in strong contrast to the demure femininity portrayed in recruitment advertising during the war. As the army strove to uphold established gender norms, the photographs, films, and articles it released reassured the public that the traditional pre-war roles were being maintained and that women were subordinate to their male counterparts.

Private Roy's figure fills much of the picture plane, underscoring the commanding character portrayed as the subject. It is significant that Lamb Bobak chose to represent a figure whose racial group was largely absent from CWAC publicity. The women's services associated with the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Canadian Navy insisted that all their members be Caucasian. This painting, the only wartime oil portrait Lamb Bobak produced, conveys her disregard for adhering to the idealized image of CWAC recruits. As Charmaine Nelson has noted, "The relationship between artist and subject comes closer to equality . . . because both women were military officers and Private Roy was likely under no obligation (financial or otherwise) to sit for Bobak's portrait."<sup>3</sup>



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Portrait of Joan Lowndes*, 1952, oil on wood panel, 91.5 x 44 cm, Vancouver Art Gallery. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, "Alice," 1943, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942-45, pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

The sketch "Alice," and the painting *Portrait of Joan Lowndes*, 1952, likewise feature striking women. The portrait of Lowndes, a Vancouver arts journalist, is markedly different from that of the portrait of Roy. Rather than a subject from a marginalized community, Lamb Bobak presents a fashionable white woman. Instead of Private Roy's unwavering gaze, Lowndes casts her look askance, as she sits with arms neatly folded and legs crossed. Lamb Bobak produced few portraits, and here she emphasizes formal qualities such as her treatment of colour. Some writers have remarked that this very original portrait attests to Lamb Bobak's skill as a colourist.<sup>4</sup>

Both portraits are fine examples of Lamb Bobak's work at different points in her career. *Private Roy* showcases her observational abilities and the skillful way she embeds subtle critiques into her paintings. *Portrait of Joan Lowndes* marks a





# MOLLY LAMB BOBAK

Life & Work by Michelle Gewurtz

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return to her focus on the language of painting. She uses the opportunity in both portraits to capture her subject while also producing an arresting modernist work.



## A BAKESHOP, SAINT-LÉONARD 1951



Molly Lamb Bobak, *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951  
Oil, gouache, and watercolour on paperboard, 81.3 x 60.8 cm  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa



For Molly Lamb Bobak, *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard* marks a return to the formal compositional elements in her work. It also reflects the influence of modern painters such as Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) and Henri Matisse (1869–1954), whose works she studied during the year she spent in France on a French government scholarship in 1950–51. This painting is one of a series from the early 1950s that comes close to abstraction. Although there is some concern with subject—a corner inside the shop—it is secondary to her exploration of form.

After her wartime work, with its emphasis on recording what she observed around her, Lamb Bobak felt the need to experiment once again with line, colour, space, and texture as she had as a student under Jack Shadbolt (1909–1998). During this time, she strove for a more mature style. The linear patterning of the racks on which jars and bread are placed dominates the image. These horizontal lines, converging at right angles to represent shelves and provide a sense of perspective, contrast with the round shapes of the loaves. The palette is muted. The artist is primarily concerned with the relationship among the elements in the composition.

*A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard* is the clearest and most complete example of Lamb Bobak's study of pattern and her juxtaposition of complementary forms. Other examples include *North Vancouver Ferry*, 1950, and *Classroom*, 1951, which depicts a series of mostly geometric shapes that recede toward two or three figures at work behind their easels in an art studio. The relationship among the chairs, easels, tables, and objects arranged in a still-life composition in the foreground is the true subject of the painting. Some critics have compared *Classroom* to Matisse's *L'Atelier Rouge*, 1911.<sup>1</sup> Both paintings offer self-contained spaces whose architecture is suggested only by the colouring of the background.

*A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard* was one of three formalist works verging on abstraction that the National Gallery of Canada purchased in the early 1950s. At that time, director H.O. McCurry (1889–1964) and curator R.H. Hubbard (1916–1989) both championed Lamb Bobak's art.



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Classroom*, 1951, oil on canvas, 72.6 x 61.8 cm, Vancouver Art Gallery.



## STILL LIFE REVISITED 1955



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Still Life Revisited*, 1955  
Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 68.8 cm  
Vancouver Art Gallery



In the early 1950s Molly Lamb Bobak worked hard to develop a mature style focused on structure, colour, and relationships among shapes. *Still Life Revisited* provides a strong example of her work as an emerging colourist. The greys and violets of the background give way to bright areas with vivid yellows, oranges, and dabs of pink. The large white upturned flower petal seems to pop from the canvas.

In Lamb Bobak's earlier painting *Still Life*, 1951, the dark geometric background contrasts sharply with the bright, intense colours of the orange and yellow fruit that is the focus of the composition. A comparison of these two images shows Lamb Bobak's progress as a colourist. *Still Life Revisited* has none of the awkwardness of the earlier composition, primarily because of the expressive brushwork and the application of intense colour in specific areas. The extraordinary vividness of colour that characterizes the artist's later work in both watercolour and oils is clearly evident.

Around this time Lamb Bobak became part of a community of painters on the West Coast known informally as the Vancouver School or the West Coast Group. These artists, including Takao Tanabe (b. 1926), Gordon Smith (b. 1919), and B.C. Binning (1909–1976), encouraged her to paint in this geometric style, as in *Crocus and Thorn*, 1959. The National Gallery of Canada purchased *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951, and selected two other paintings—an unnamed portrait and a still-life composition listed as “Natureza Morta Com Passaro Cor de Laranja” (possibly *Still Life*, 1951)—to represent Canada at the Bienal de São Paulo of 1953.<sup>1</sup>



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Crocus and Thorn*, 1959, oil on board, 81.3 x 91.4 cm, private collection. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Still Life*, 1951, oil on fibreboard, 81.2 x 41.5 cm, private collection.



## FLORENCE N.D.

Molly Lamb Bobak, *Florence*, n.d.

Lithograph, 44 x 82.1 cm

The Leslie B. Marcus Collection, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton

Molly Lamb Bobak was intrigued with printmaking, though it was never her primary medium. The few prints she made show the same interest in patterning and design that her paintings exhibit, particularly her crowd scenes, still lifes, and interiors. Lithographs from the early 1960s, including several city scenes from the Bobaks' time in Europe, demonstrate her interest in densely populated urban scenes.

In *Florence* she views the city from a distance, creating a complicated composition of buildings, trees, and shrubbery. Her bird's-eye view of the iconic city, with the Duomo recognizable in the distance, stands in contrast to another lithograph entitled *View from the Bridge*, n.d.

This urban scene, representing a wintry street, is not specific to any city or country. Although Lamb Bobak's rendering of buildings and trees indicates some concern for pattern, the treatment appears more gestural and atmospheric, resembling her drawings or watercolours—for example, her wartime charcoal and ink drawing *Bremen Ruins at Night*, 1946. When her early prints were shown in Vancouver, critics praised those of Florence's rooftops in particular.<sup>1</sup>

Lamb Bobak created a few fine examples of lithographs, etchings, and relief prints, but there is little record of her mentioning them. She recalled making prints in England, possibly after taking classes in printmaking techniques in Norway, and it is likely that *Florence* and other scenes were composed after a sojourn in Italy.<sup>2</sup> *Florence* stands as a testament to her success in this medium, but, in her usual modest way, she said that she did not produce "any substantive output of her own" when it came to printmaking.<sup>3</sup>

Molly Lamb Bobak, *View from the Bridge*, n.d., lithograph, 40.6 x 55.8 cm, private collection.



## OSLO STREET 1961



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Oslo Street*, 1961  
Pastel on paper, 47.3 x 62.4 cm  
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

*Oslo Street*, one of the earliest of Molly Lamb Bobak's crowd scenes, is perhaps the most successful of her compositions from her time in Norway. It features the flow of pedestrians on a street in Oslo on a dull day, backed by a solid row of old buildings. Almost monochromatic in design, the only colour comes from the coats worn by a few people and some touches in the windows immediately above the shops.

Lamb Bobak began to draw and paint groups of people when she enlisted in the Canadian Women's Army Corps in 1942, though she said that her interest in crowds dated back to childhood: "I think that it is an interest I have had ever since I was a kid. I simply love gatherings, mingling . . . and seeing crowds. . . . It's like ants crawling, the sort of insignificance and yet the beauty of people all getting together."<sup>1</sup> Her mother, Mary Williams, was fond of hosting large gatherings, often while her partner, Harold Mortimer-Lamb (1872-1970), was away. Lamb Bobak's interest in crowds suggests Williams's influence.



From 1957 until 1961 Bruno Bobak (1923–2012) and Molly Lamb Bobak spent much of their time working in Europe, mainly in Norway and Britain, on a series of Canada Council grants. The experience of living abroad proved critical to Lamb Bobak's development as a painter: she began to produce large, panoramic compositions of urban life, particularly in crowd scenes bursting with energy and movement. After the birth of her second child, Anny, she found it easier to focus on city vistas populated by groups of people, where detail became secondary to a sense of bustling life.

Over the decades that followed, these crowd scenes became one of Lamb Bobak's most popular styles of painting, and, inevitably, they reflected the area where she was living. She depicted them either straight on or from a bird's-eye perspective, as in *The Fair*, n.d. *Arrival, City Hall*, 1976, is similar in composition to *Oslo Street*, as Lamb Bobak views the people celebrating Canada Day before a century-old building from the perspective of someone in their midst.



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Fair*, n.d., oil on canvas board, 30.5 x 40.6 cm, private collection. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Arrival, City Hall*, 1976, oil on canvas, 121.9 x 101.6 cm, private collection.

Lamb Bobak described her working method for *Oslo Street* in a letter she wrote to its purchaser, George Kidd, the Canadian ambassador to Cuba:

I drew it from the back of our car, which I had parked there for the purpose. It is difficult to draw out on the streets in Norway as the people are so friendly and interested—so I used to sit in the car whenever I could. . . . I found Oslo exactly like a stage set for an Ibsen play—although Norwegians today don't strike me as being Ibsen characters.<sup>2</sup>

The National Gallery of Canada included *Oslo Street* in the 4th Biennial of Canadian Painting, held in 1961.



## RINK THEME—SKATERS 1969



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969  
Oil on Masonite, 151.5 x 121 cm  
Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa

Molly Lamb Bobak obviously enjoyed experimenting in her crowd scenes with a variety of techniques and formal elements to achieve different effects—with perspective, structure, and space. In *Rink Theme—Skaters*, she adopts an unusual bird's-eye perspective and pushes the figures to the edge of the composition, leaving a large area of negative space in the middle. She paints the image without any horizon line, thereby encouraging viewers to follow the blur of skaters circling the rink. Though the painting veers toward abstraction, its main focus is on movement and positioning the figures in space.



In her paintings of skaters from the late 1960s, Lamb Bobak drew inspiration from the American abstract-expressionist painter Sam Francis (1923–1994). One series of drawings and paintings, based on her observations at hockey games in Fredericton, places the audience on the sidelines, with one or two skaters occupying the central white space of the rink. Curator Ian Lumsden compared this suite, with its “swirling vortex of activity,” to J.M.W. Turner’s (1775–1851) *Snow Storm—Steam-Boat off a Harbour’s Mouth*, 1842—a painting where the subject becomes movement itself.<sup>1</sup>



J.M.W. Turner, *Snow Storm—Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth*, 1842, oil on canvas, 91.5 x 122 cm, Tate Gallery, London.

As a “passionate spectator,” Lamb Bobak always found meaning and beauty in the everyday world around her. She created many compositions of skaters—a quintessentially Canadian theme—in a variety of media, but she never descended into kitsch. She compared her treatment of crowd scenes to her paintings of flowers.<sup>2</sup> The watercolours *Little Poppies*, 1971, and *Anemones*, 1975, for example, also play with negative space to help achieve their vitality. Lamb Bobak attributed this aspect of her work to the influence of Eastern art, citing (without any identification) a composition that featured two small persimmons at the bottom of the picture plane amid an otherwise empty space.<sup>3</sup>

In a comparable work, the lithograph *The School Yard*, 1962, Lamb Bobak achieves a sense of movement amid the mass of children by different means. She populates the entire picture plane with childish figures rendered in black, though in the foreground and the middle ground the children, accompanied by a few adults, are grouped into clusters, with small areas of negative space separating them. The group in the background appears to be denser, defined by a near lack of negative space. Through this technique, Lamb Bobak develops a sense of perspective in the composition.



## JOHN, DICK, AND THE QUEEN 1977



Molly Lamb Bobak, *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977

Oil on canvas, 101.3 x 121.2 cm

New Brunswick Art Bank

In July 1976 Molly Lamb Bobak was commissioned to document the official visit by Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh to New Brunswick. This opportunity, she said, extended her interest in portraying people in group situations. She travelled to towns and cities throughout the province, sketching the boisterous crowds waiting to catch a glimpse of the royal couple.

In *John, Dick, and the Queen*, Lamb Bobak places herself, and by extension the viewer, at ground level among the revellers, sharing in the excitement as they wave their flags. She uses colour to reinforce the rhythm and the drama she experienced as part of this jubilant crowd. The Queen, dressed in blue, is crossing the field accompanied by Premier Richard Hatfield and John Saunders, Lamb Bobak's friend who worked for the Ministry of Culture. Later, as a humorous private aside, she dubbed it "The Three Queens"—knowing that both men were gay.<sup>1</sup>



Lamb Bobak succeeds in capturing the exuberance of the crowd that day, and she conveys this excitement to the viewers. Like the artist herself, they in turn join the joyful, swaying masses:

I've never been so excited as on that day. I think the whole of Fredericton felt that way (whether they're monarchists or not). I was really excited by the crowd and the joy in the town, the flags. I was laughing, I was crying . . . at the sheer pleasure everyone was having –the dancers, the pipers, everyone that was there . . . every place I looked there was a subject for me . . . to paint.<sup>2</sup>

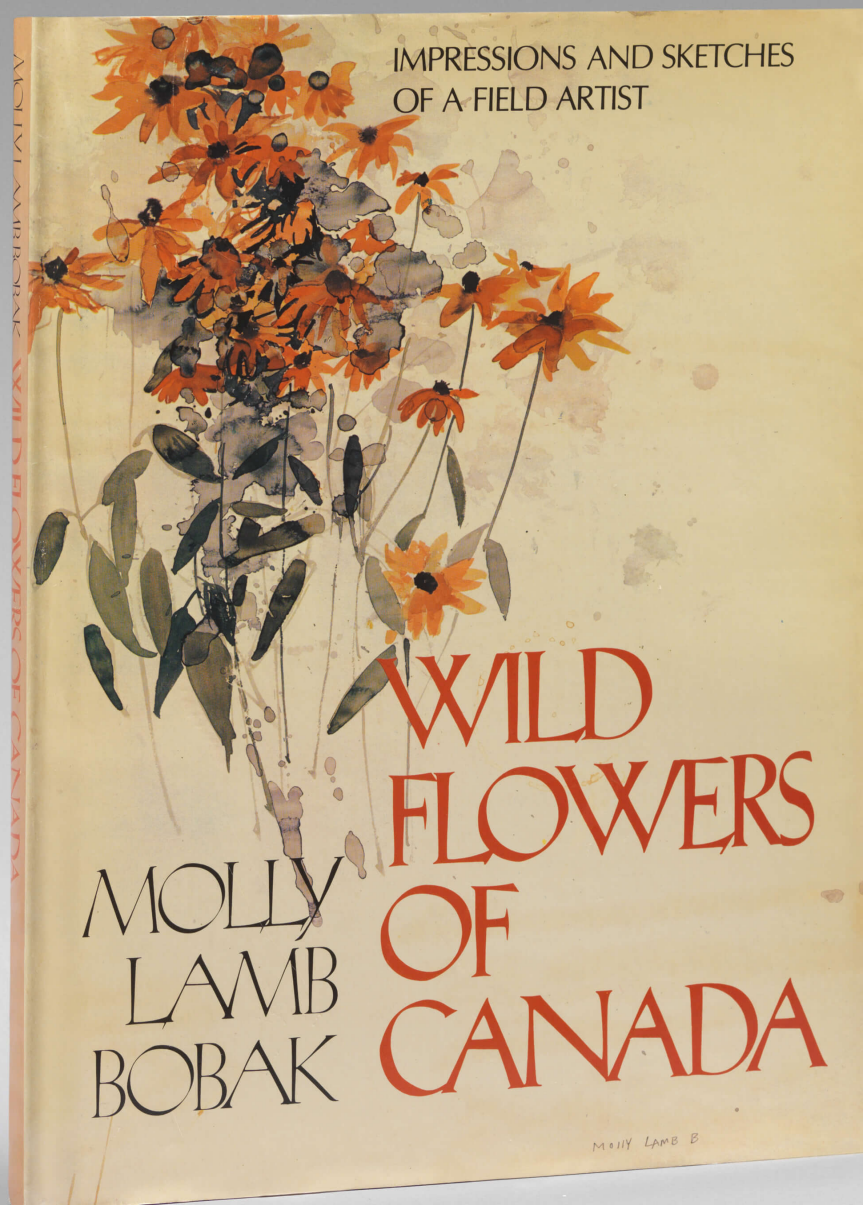
The perspective Lamb Bobak employs in *John, Dick, and the Queen* is different from the more distant one she usually favours in her crowd scenes, and that affects the sense of movement within the image. In the colourful, semi-abstract canvas *November 11, 1971*, depicting a crowd assembled for Armistice Day events in Vancouver, she situates the viewer above the crowd, looking down at the people who have gathered to watch the parade. She positions them so they can see the marchers as they progress from the background on the left into the foreground on the right. The viewers' sense of movement is heightened by the loose brushwork and the bold white traffic lines on the pavement.



Molly Lamb Bobak, *November 11, 1971*, oil on board, 122 x 102 cm, Firestone Collection of Canadian Art, Ottawa Art Gallery.



## WILD FLOWERS OF CANADA: IMPRESSIONS AND SKETCHES OF A FIELD ARTIST ARTIST 1978



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (1978)

96 pages, colour illustration  
Published by Pagurian Press



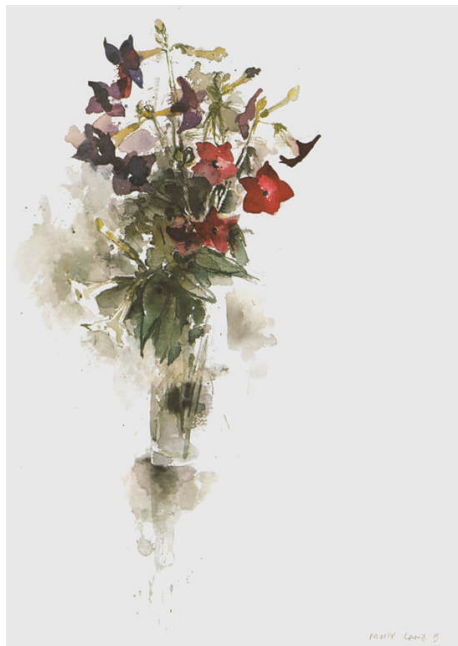
*Wild Flowers of Canada* is an unusual memoir that combines direct narrative and keenly observed images of clusters of wildflowers. Molly Lamb Bobak's watercolours of flowers are among her most revered compositions, especially by collectors of her work. It is not clear exactly when she began to focus on flowers as a subject, though she credited her move to Fredericton and the many wildflowers in New Brunswick as her inspiration:

New Brunswick has influenced me a lot. We've had a good life here. It is a country full of wild flowers from May to October. I know exactly when they are coming out. I never seem to get tired of them. I think now how many years more can I paint cosmos? Every year I am ready to do them again. I have certain flowers I like. They are simple, single flowers.<sup>1</sup>

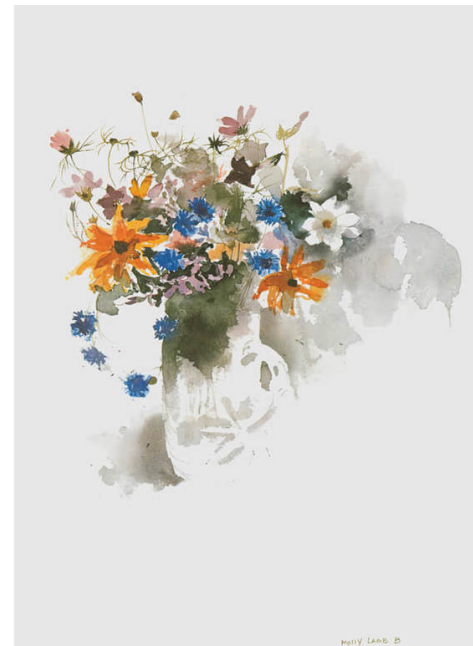
Lamb Bobak acknowledged that she had always loved flowers, right from her childhood in the country near Burnaby Lake, B.C. Her mother was an avid gardener, though she herself was more drawn to wildflowers than to manicured gardens. In her years on the West Coast in the 1950s she painted flowers in oil, but in Fredericton, inspired by the work of her husband, Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), she switched to watercolour for most of her flower studies.<sup>2</sup>

Lamb Bobak sketched her blooms in different media much as she gathered them, casually arranged in a jar or spread on a surface before her. Her loose handling of paint works well in her often delicate representations of wildflowers and her use of negative space—as in her treatment of skaters (*Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969). She credited David Milne (1881–1953), an accomplished watercolourist, with heightening her appreciation and awareness of positive and negative areas in her compositions.

Art historian David P. Silcox notes in his foreword to the memoir that the book is a double self-portrait. While the narrative chronicles Lamb Bobak's story from childhood to maturity, the paintings also serve as self-portraits. They illustrate a life of happy memories: "Bouquet with Tobacco Plant," 1977, for example, appears alongside the narrative of her early years, and the caption relays details about her parents—the Oriental vases her father collected (now in the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria), and how annoyed he was when her mother filled them with flowers. "Tulips," 1977, reminds her of her elementary school in spring. "A Jug of August Flowers," 1977, recalls her life in British Columbia just before her enlistment in the Canadian Women's Army Corps.



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, "Bouquet with Tobacco Plant," 1977, colour illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978). RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, "A Jug of August Flowers," 1977, colour illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978).





The paintings also illustrate aspects of Lamb Bobak's art. With *Geraniums*, 1977, she describes the artistic potential she saw in them: "I first came to love geraniums after seeing them in a Cézanne painting. I love to paint [them] because of their awkward changes in direction—they suggest interesting arrangements in space—staccato rhythms instead of undulating, obvious ones."<sup>3</sup> *White Tulips*, 1956, provides an excellent early example of Lamb Bobak's mature style. This oil painting features two vases filled with the white blooms, with a few blue flowers that resemble irises added to offset the monochromatic light grey background. The petals and leaves have a geometric and angular quality that was typical of her preoccupation at that time with the formal relationships of lines and space in her compositions, as in *Still Life Revisited*, 1955.

In the same way that depicting crowds captured Lamb Bobak's interest as an artist (as in *Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969), so did flowers, and she painted them in a variety of styles—in quick gestures, in geometrically abstract shapes, and as detailed studies of texture, colour, and form. Each image is deftly rendered, displaying her facility with the difficult medium of watercolour. Taken together, the text and images illustrate the vibrancy of a life well lived.



## BLACK ROCKS, CAESARIA 1985



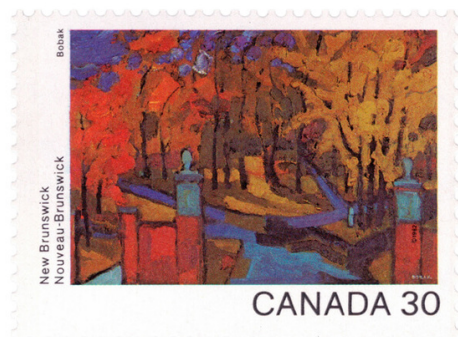
Molly Lamb Bobak, *Black Rocks, Caesaria*, 1985  
Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 101.6 cm  
Private collection

Molly Lamb Bobak painted *Black Rocks, Caesaria*, during a visit to Israel. This scene from the Mediterranean coast captures the tension in her mature work between abstraction and representation.<sup>1</sup>

The dark rocks along the shoreline are clearly the subject, with no people in view. The brushwork is light and hazy, suggesting the influence of J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851). In a letter to her mentor Jack Shadbolt (1909–1998), Lamb Bobak recounted the feelings of creative excitement she felt while she was painting this scene: “I rushed at the canvas with the security of knowing exactly what was in my eye—and there it was—a painting I really know was terrific; still a subject, but so much a part of the paint, all wedded, all alive.”<sup>2</sup>



Lamb Bobak was drawn to beach scenes later in her career. *Tea Hill*, 1981, a beach in Tea Hill Provincial Park, P.E.I., was reproduced in "Canada Day, 1982: Canada Through the Eyes of Its Artists"—the commemorative series sponsored by Canada Post Corporation. It featured both contemporary and historical works, including *Campus Gates*, 1964, by Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), which was chosen to represent New Brunswick. Lamb Bobak's contribution evokes a sense of movement in the painterly treatment of the clouds and the receding water at low tide.

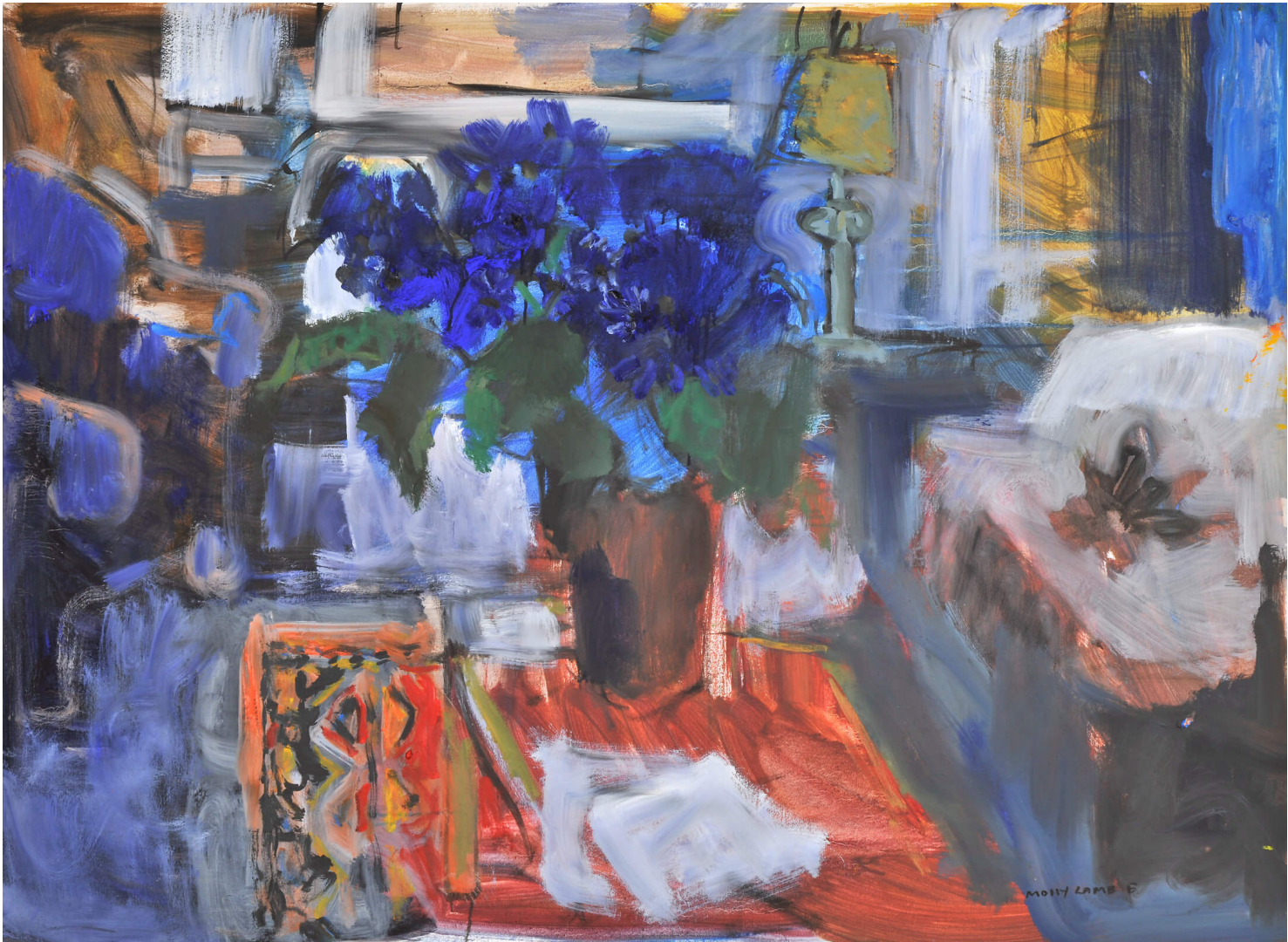


LEFT : Molly Lamb Bobak, *Tea Hill*, 1981 (appeared on stamp, 1982), Canada Post Corporation. RIGHT: Bruno Bobak, *Campus Gates*, 1964 (appeared on stamp, 1982), University of New Brunswick Collection, Fredericton.

She suggests a human presence in the daubs of paint along an expanse of land at the centre of the composition, but the blustery beach atmosphere is the true subject of the painting. As with *Black Rocks, Caesaria*, the theme is clear, though the work is painterly and suggests an expressive response to the landscape.



## INTERIOR WITH MOROCCAN CARPET 1991



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Interior with Moroccan Carpet*, 1991

Oil on canvas, 91 x 122 cm

MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina

In *Interior with Moroccan Carpet*, a painting from late in her career, Molly Lamb Bobak has produced a hybrid work—both a still life and an interior composition. Bobak's interior scenes are the antithesis of her crowd scenes: devoid of people and lacking in movement, they are serene and quiet. Yet in this image, as in many of her other interiors, she has captured an energy in the way she arranges the objects in the room. The furniture, including a couch, lamp, and drapes, is rendered in vigorous brush strokes. The Moroccan carpet is woven with vibrant colours and patterns. The vase, full of deep-blue flowers and placed beside a pile of papers on a glass coffee table, becomes the focal point of the composition. The room may not be identified, but the artist exudes an emotional connection with it.



Although Lamb Bobak's family and particularly her husband, Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), supported her desire to be a professional artist, her studio was often located in their home. As a result, she produced several interiors that were her own intimate spaces.

*Living Room*, 1973, painted in the Bobak home on Lansdowne Street in Fredericton, exhibits a lived-in feeling through the furniture and the artwork on the walls. Complex

patterns marked in repeated shades of red tie the composition together. The mood in this domestic gathering place is celebratory.

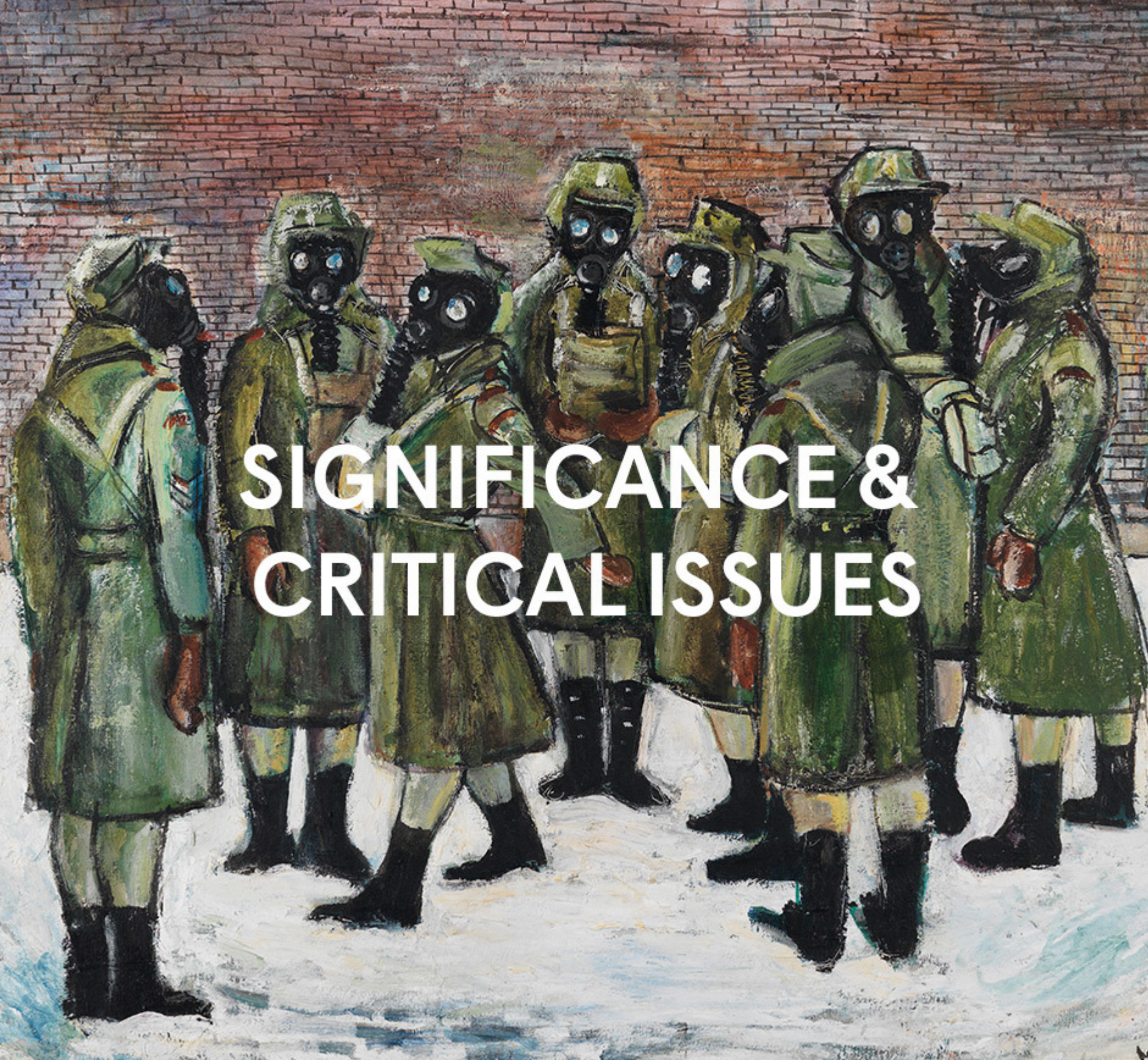


LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Living Room*, 1973, oil on Masonite, 80 x 121 cm, Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Studio*, 1956, oil on board, 60.5 x 45 cm, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



Throughout her life, Lamb Bobak combined an interest in subject matter with the elements of formal composition in her work, not only in the objects she includes within the picture frame but also in the spatial relationships among them. In *Interior with Moroccan Carpet*, the objects in the room are also recognizable as organic shapes with their own unity, energy, and equilibrium. In this way, the painting exhibits a maturity missing in her earlier formal studies, such as *The Studio*, 1956—a feeling of aesthetic unity and visual harmony.





# SIGNIFICANCE & CRITICAL ISSUES

Molly Lamb was the only Canadian woman during the Second World War to be appointed an official war artist and sent overseas. She immediately established herself as an artist of keen observation, wit, and humour. Although she and her husband, Bruno Bobak, settled on the periphery of Canadian art centres, in Vancouver and then in Fredericton, she remained international in outlook and connected with artists throughout Canada and abroad. As a painter of modern life, she focused on exuberant scenes of everyday life such as crowds, interiors, and, most popularly, flowers.



### A WOMAN WAR ARTIST

After almost two years of lobbying, in June 1945 Lieutenant Molly Lamb became the first and only woman accredited by the federal government as one of the thirty-two official Canadian war artists. The others, all of whom belonged to the Canadian Armed Forces, included Aba Bayefsky (1923–2001), Lawren P. Harris (1910–1994), Charles Comfort (1900–1994), Will Ogilvie (1901–1989), Alex Colville (1920–2013), and Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), whom she married later that same year.



Molly Lamb in her studio, n.d., photographer unknown.

Because Lamb was a woman, she was assigned to overseas duty only at the end of the war when hostilities in Europe had ceased. Colonel A.F. Duguid, director of the Canadian Army Historical Section and the army's representative on the Canadian War Artists Selection Committee, stated in June 1943 that "from the Army's point of view their [women's] appointment was not desirable as the artists were at the scene of combat."<sup>1</sup> The National Gallery of Canada disagreed and commissioned Alma Duncan (1917–2004), Pegi Nicol MacLeod (1904–1949), and Paraskeva Clark (1898–1986) to document the war effort in Canada, focusing on women's contributions and perspective. By the autumn of 1944 the War Artists Selection Committee proposed sending Lamb abroad as a war artist. Six months later, with Europe secured, she finally received permission to travel.

When asked years later whether she chose to focus on "the human element in the war effort away from the battlefield," she replied:

They didn't lay down any laws but the women weren't near the battle ever. . . . The women were mostly behind the lines in Europe and the war was over anyway and so . . . if I saw Amsterdam . . . I would just put a few little CWACs [Canadian Women's Army Corps] in the street and paint the city and that was valid. The CWACs were there . . . I think the government would have liked me to have painted the activities of the women, and I did—in laundries, as drivers and chauffeurs, and the pipe band, but then I also threw in a lot of my own ideas.<sup>2</sup>





LEFT: Molly Lamb, *Ruins of Emmerich, Germany, 1945*, watercolour, ink, charcoal, and graphite on paper, 35.7 x 50.8 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb, *Signing Up for the Pacific, 1945*, oil on canvas, 50.5 x 83.5 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

By focusing on the activities of the CWAC overseas, often in a humorous and positive sense, Lamb produced works similar to those she had composed in her illustrated war diary, *W110278*, during her years of service in Canada—for example, in *Basic Trainees Learning to Stand at Ease, 1946*. Brian Foss, who studied her work as a war artist, laments this likeness, though he acknowledges that she also challenged herself by producing sketches and paintings of the devastation of war, as in *Ruins of Emmerich, Germany* and *Bremen Ruins at Night*, both 1945.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, despite the perceived limitations of this continuity in her work, Lamb's documentation provides a rare look into the wartime activities of Canadian servicewomen. Her CWACs *Sorting Mail*, n.d., for example, illustrates activities performed by women far from the front lines that helped to maintain the war effort. *Salmon in the Galley, 1944*, and other commissioned works by Nicol MacLeod, serve the same purpose: as Nicol MacLeod explained, "Only if all the women painters in Canada were to cover all the activities of all the Women's Divisions could this story ever be depicted properly."<sup>4</sup>



LEFT: Molly Lamb, "For Ladies W110278 Presents 1943 Fall Fashions," 1943, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*, pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. RIGHT: McWhirters' Easter Specials, "Featuring Attractive Bargains for Everybody," 1940s clothing advertisement.

Lamb was no doubt aware of gender bias in both the army and the Canadian art world generally, but she usually dealt with such issues with parody and good humour. While military recruitment posters presented servicewomen in glamorous, idealized contexts to combat fears over the "de-feminization" of women in the military, Lamb



used caricature to poke fun at these images. On one occasion in her diary she produced a special colour supplement titled "For Ladies[,] W110278 Presents 1943 Fall Fashions," a work that was based on contemporary newspaper advertisements for women.

There she took on an alter ego, "Modom Mouton (English Pronunciation [sic] Lamb)"—a play on words that, Tanya Schaap notes, was intended to evoke the idiom "mutton dressed as a lamb."<sup>5</sup> "Hats will be on the face this fall," Modom Mouton declares, but instead of a fashion model, Lamb depicts a servicewoman in her khaki army cap. Only in her portrait *Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps*, 1946, did Lamb present a striking contrast to the common depiction of women in the Canadian Armed Forces as ironically genteel and uniformly Caucasian.

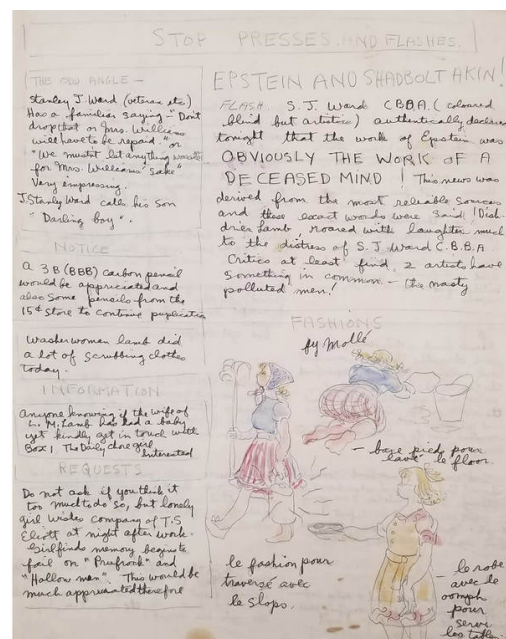
## HUMOUR

Humour played a central role in Molly Lamb Bobak's art, from her time at the Vancouver School of Art through to her later crowd scenes and book illustrations. It reflected her general joie de vivre and optimistic approach to life. Humour has been a key component in modern art practice since the early twentieth century, from Dada and Surrealism through Fluxus and Pop to the work in Canada of Greg Curnoe (1936-1992), for example. Recently, art historians have begun to explore the ways in which Canadian visual culture—private journals, broadsheets, and political publications—has been enriched by graphics imbued with wit and playfulness.<sup>6</sup>

Lamb used humour to poke fun gently at the status quo. When she worked at the summer resort on Vancouver Island as a student, her diary, *The Daily Chore Girl—Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940, revealed her penchant for comedy through caricature and prose. She mocks herself by using various alter egos, including "Renoir Lamb" and "Slavvy."<sup>7</sup> One such "coloured supplement" from July 1940 positions Lamb alongside Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) and Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), painters she greatly admired. As these modern masters support her girlish figure, the caption reads: "Actual photo of 3 outcasts, M. Cézanne, M. Lamb, and M. Gauguin—All Wishing to Be Home." The island road sign beside them points toward Vancouver. Another entry features "Fashions by Mollé," illustrating Lamb in her work uniform carrying out various chores: "le fashion pour traversé avec le slops" and "le robe avec le oomph pour servir les tables." Like the "painter of modern life" Constantin Guys (1802-1892), described by the



LEFT: Molly Lamb, "Renoir Lamb at Work on Galiano Wharf (Coloured Supplement)" (lower right), 1940, illustration from *The Daily Chore Girl—Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940, watercolour and pencil on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.



RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, "Fashions by Mollé (Stop Press)," (lower right) 1940, illustration from *The Daily Chore Girl—Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940, watercolour and pencil on wove paper, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.



poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867), Lamb demonstrates an aptitude for detailed observation—the “particular beauty . . . of circumstances and the sketch of manners.”<sup>8</sup>

Two years later, when Lamb joined the Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC), she again kept a diary, *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942–45, which mimicked a daily broadsheet in format and caricatured army life. Over three years, it records her feelings as a servicewoman—a combination of excitement and well-being somewhat at odds with a regimen where discipline and routine were paramount. As an artist, she wrote, the army offered her many benefits:

The whole structure of army life is agreeable to a painter. All the nuances of living are done away with because you don’t have to cook, you don’t have to worry about being poor or sick or being without warm clothes. And everywhere you turn there is something terrific to paint.<sup>9</sup>

Best of all, Lamb Bobak noted, was the camaraderie with her fellow CWACs—“that, basically, we were all alike.”<sup>10</sup> *Gas Drill*, 1944, demonstrates this group spirit as well as her propensity for caricature. The finished canvas was based on a sketch, “Drill, Drill, Drill as Guppies Turn Pro! Out in the Cold Cold Snow,” 1942, where a number of women in army uniform stand in the snow wearing gas masks, and that sketch was echoed in *Untitled (Christmas Card)*, c.1995.

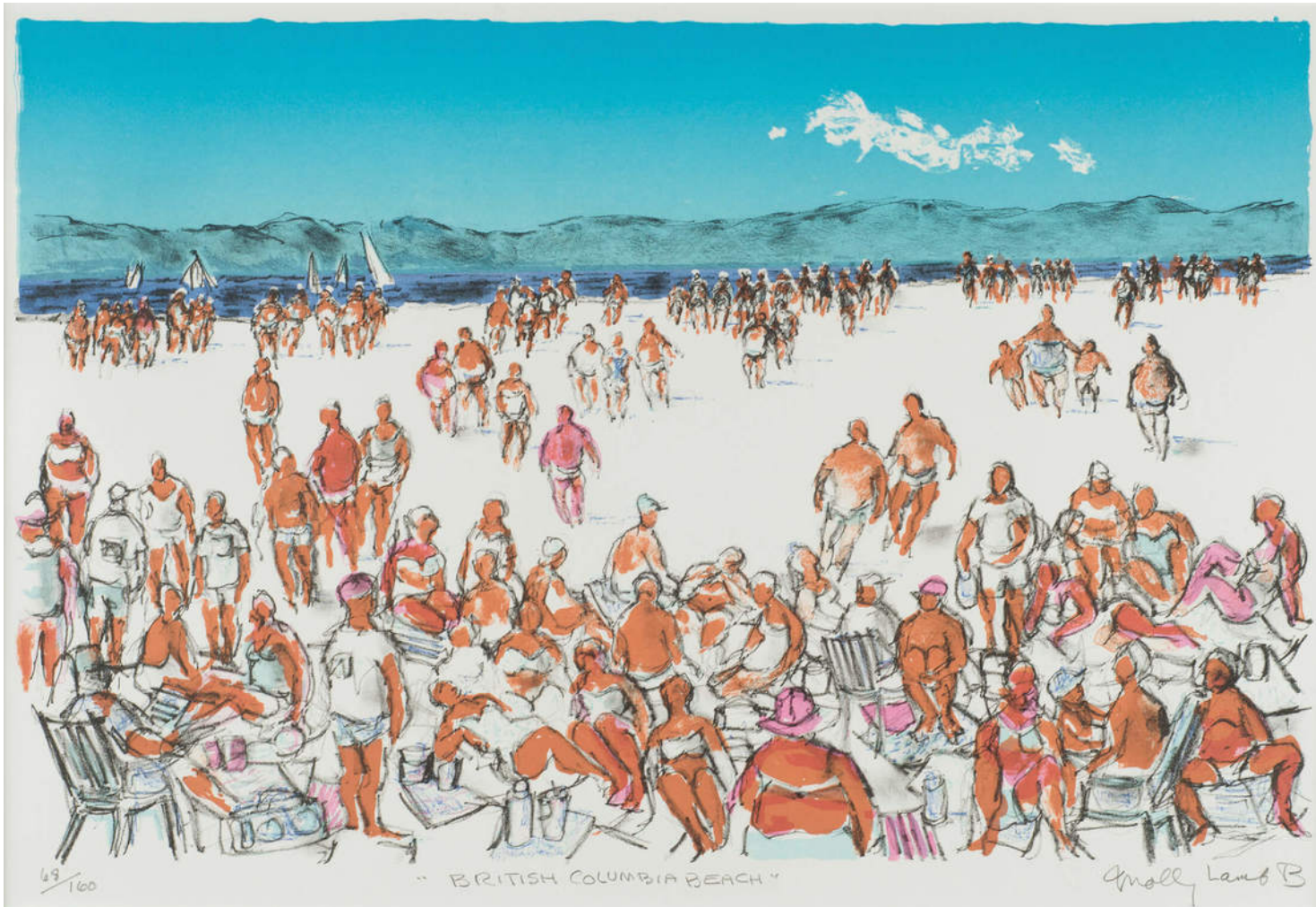


Molly Lamb Bobak, *Untitled (Christmas Card)*, c.1995, graphite, ink, and watercolour on paper, 11.4 x 15.9 cm, Ottawa Art Gallery.

She playfully catches the confusion of “respirator drill day” as the recruits try but fail to execute commands that they cannot quite hear through the masks. As one CWAC recalls, “In Basic Training, if you hadn’t been able to laugh, you wouldn’t have been able to retain your sanity. In fact, there were a few who didn’t.”<sup>11</sup>

Lamb’s early inclination toward caricature and parody comes through in her later work in subtle ways. In *The Tea, Fredericton*, 1964, she gently pokes fun at Fredericton’s society women for taking themselves too seriously. Similarly, *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977, offers a humorous representation of the royal visit to New Brunswick, where Queen Elizabeth II stands out in the crowd distinguished by her cartoonish blue dress and beaming red smile.



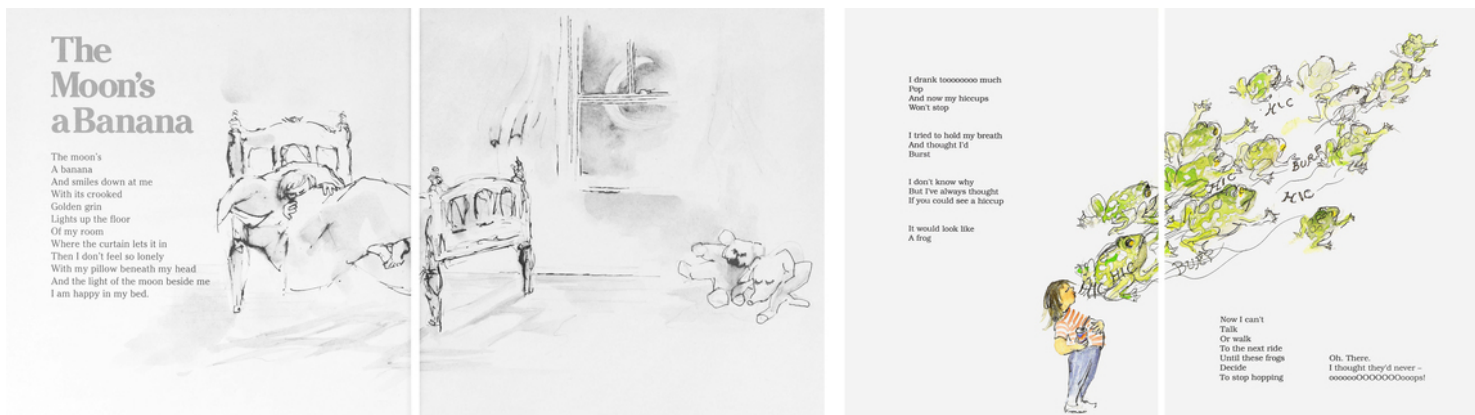


Molly Lamb Bobak, *British Columbia Beach*, 1993, lithograph, 38.1 x 57.2 cm, City of Burnaby Permanent Art Collection.

In *British Columbia Beach*, 1993, a lithograph Lamb Bobak produced to raise funds for Artists for Kids, the red, sunburned bodies she depicts on the white sand led curator Ian Thom to quip, "Fredericton bodies on a B.C. Beach."<sup>12</sup>

While playful tendencies are often subdued in Lamb Bobak's crowd scenes, they return as an explicit component of her work in illustrations for children's books, such as those by Sheree Fitch and Anny Scoones, the Bobaks' daughter. Using a caricature-based style similar to what she used in her wartime journals, in *Merry-Go-Day* (1991) Lamb Bobak adds personality and a rich narrative to scenes where Fitch's protagonists romp through the Fredericton Exhibition and eat too much fair food. Throughout, she relies on an illustrative approach to the text that she resisted in her paintings. In Scoones's *A Tale of Merlin the Billy Dog* (2000), she depicts the goat, Merlin, as dog-like and slightly bumbling, even as she captures the absurdities of daily life through sharp observation.





LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, illustration for “The Moon’s a Banana” in Sheree Fitch, *Toes in My Nose and Other Poems* (1987). RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, illustration for “Frog Burping” in Sheree Fitch, *Merry-Go Day* (1991).

## AN INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Molly Lamb Bobak spent most of her career working as a figurative (or representational) painter, first in Vancouver and later in Fredericton, but her work never conformed to the regionalist flavour of either coast. In both Canada and the United States, regionalism was seen as a rejection of European-style modernism in favour of local, often rural subject matter.<sup>13</sup> Wherever Lamb Bobak lived, she maintained close connections with painters in Canada’s key centres of artistic activity. She also kept abreast of international modernist trends and allowed important European and American artists to influence her painting—Paul Cézanne and Red Grooms (b.1937), for example.

After brief periods in Toronto and Ottawa following the war, the Bobak family moved to British Columbia, where, in the fall of 1947, Bruno Bobak began teaching at the Vancouver School of Art. There they became part of a community of artists that included Jack Shadbolt (1909–1998) and his wife, the writer Doris Shadbolt (1918–2003), Jack Nichols (1921–2009), Lawren Harris (1885–1970), Audrey Capal Doray (b.1931), architects Arthur Erickson (1924–2009) and Ron Thom (1923–1986), and several other painters who had also served overseas in the war.<sup>14</sup> The Bobaks found themselves among a new generation of artists who were trying to integrate art and design into the everyday life of communities.

In the 1950s many of these Vancouver artists expressed a renewed interest in integrating nature into art.<sup>15</sup> The Bobaks and Shadbolts, however, took a different slant and introduced modern British artistic ideas and imagery to the city. During the war, while in London, they had encountered works by Paul Nash (1889–1946), Graham Sutherland (1903–1980), Henry Moore (1898–1886), and Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975), and Lamb Bobak had also seen an exhibition of contemporary British art at the National Gallery of Canada in 1944. In the 1950s she experimented with geometric elements in her work. In *North Vancouver Ferry*, 1950, for example, a quasi-cubist quality gives shape to the featureless passengers, the division of space is geometric, and the diverging perspectives collide. In *Still Life*, 1951, too, she abandons traditional perspective and veers toward geometric abstraction.



Molly Lamb Bobak, *North Vancouver Ferry*, 1950, oil on fibreboard, 59.8 x 50.4 cm, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



Alan Jarvis (1915–1972), the director of the National Gallery of Canada, and R.H. Hubbard (1916–1989), his curator of Canadian art, singled out this particular group of artists working on the West Coast. Jarvis was quoted in the British periodical *The Studio* in 1957 as saying, “There are more good artists per square mile in BC than in all the rest of the country.”<sup>16</sup> Although these painters—Takao Tanabe (b.1926) and Donald Jarvis (1923–2001), along with other artists including Shadbolt and the Bobaks—did not consider themselves a “school” or adhere to common styles or philosophies, they shared an attitude toward the landscape and its representation.

Lamb Bobak’s *Grain Boats at English Bay, Vancouver Harbour*, n.d., captures her impressions of the waterfront, with the densely crowded beach set against the freighters floating in the distance. Her short brush strokes and diffuse rendering of the bathers encourage viewers to focus on the scene as a whole—a summer’s day at the beach. Bruno Bobak’s canvases from this time, in contrast, are more symbolic in their gestural and expressionist treatment—for example, *Vancouver Harbour*, c.1959, and *Springtime in North Vancouver*, 1960.



Molly Lamb Bobak, *Grain Boats at English Bay, Vancouver Harbour*, n.d., oil on canvas, 101.6 x 121.9 cm, private collection.



In 1961, after several years of working and travelling in Europe, the Bobak family settled in Fredericton, where Bruno and Molly quickly became core members of another creative group. Together with poets Fred Cogswell, Alden Nowlan, and Robert Gibbs, they were integral in bringing together painters, writers, and thinkers to define an era that has been described as a golden age for art in New Brunswick.<sup>17</sup> The province is noted for its decentralized arts scene, with each city defined by key artists: Alex Colville, Christopher Pratt (b.1935), and Mary Pratt (1935–2018) with Sackville; Jack Humphrey (1901–1967) and Miller Brittain (1912–1968) with Saint John; Claude Roussel (b.1930) and Roméo Savoie (b.1928) with Moncton; and Bruno and Molly Lamb Bobak with Fredericton.<sup>18</sup> With few exceptions, they all worked in a realist and representative manner.<sup>19</sup>

However, neither Bruno nor Molly Lamb Bobak can be classified as regional artists. Although they helped to define Fredericton as an art centre, they were not defined by the city or the region. Painting landscapes of specific places, so important for artists such as Goodridge Roberts (1904–1974), was less important to Lamb Bobak. Still, her highly individual and modernist response to the cities of Vancouver, Victoria, and Fredericton and to local scenery in New Brunswick is a critical aspect of her artistic creation—as in the colourfully and gesturally rendered *Shediac, (N.B.)*, 1972, and *Montague Beach, Galiano Island*, c.1990.



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Shediac Beach (N.B.)* 1972, oil on Masonite, 56 x 76 cm, Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Montague Beach, Galiano Island*, c.1990, oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm, private collection.

In her art, Lamb Bobak was always influenced by “artists from away”—modern painters such as Joseph Plaskett (1918–2014) in Paris, Kenneth Hayes Miller (1876–1952) at the Art Students League in New York, and Frances-Anne Johnston (1918–1987), who inspired her to explore and push the language of painting in her compositions. Lamb Bobak shipped her paintings to galleries in other cities—Kastel Gallery, Galerie Walter Klinkhoff, and Waddington’s in Montreal, the Roberts Gallery in Toronto, and the New Design Gallery in Vancouver—where they were bought by collectors and viewed by local art



lovers. She also exhibited her work widely throughout Canada in both solo and group exhibitions. In 1959 she represented Canada at the Bienal de São Paulo and participated in the International Print Exhibition held in Lugano, Switzerland. In 1966 her work was celebrated alongside her contemporaries in Atlantic Canada with a large exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Canada.<sup>20</sup> And in 1993 the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina organized a major touring retrospective exhibition and catalogue of her work.<sup>21</sup>

### CROWD SCENES AND FLOWERS

Molly Lamb Bobak generally sketched or painted everyday life. However, she became well known for two subjects in particular: crowd scenes and flower paintings. A 2018 exhibition entitled *Talk of the Town* organized by the Burnaby Art Gallery featured Lamb Bobak's unique ability to capture the pulse of crowds from a variety of vantage points. As curator Hilary Letwin notes: "Molly Lamb Bobak's paintings are full of talk: people excitedly calling to each other in the crowd, chatting about this and that, whispering the latest gossip on a street corner."<sup>22</sup>

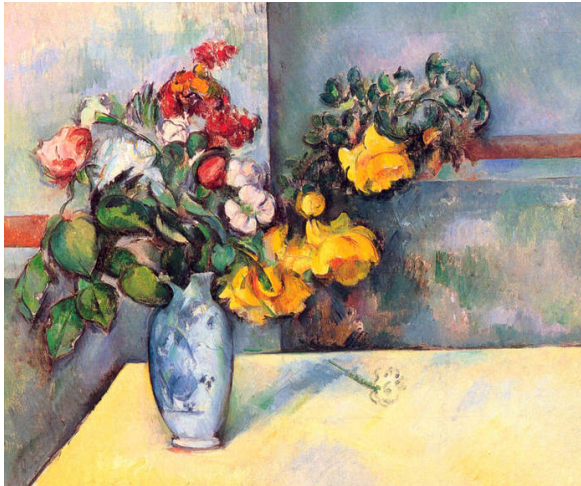


LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *CWACs on Leave in Amsterdam, September, 1945, 1946*, oil on canvas, 60.9 x 76.2 cm, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Burt's Corner Band*, 1987, oil on canvas, 114.3 x 132.1 cm, private collection.

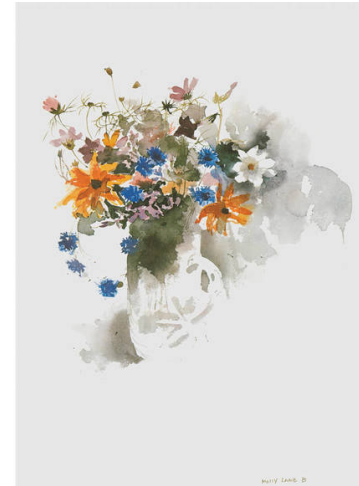
These crowd scenes represent Lamb Bobak's commitment to translating her impressions of lived experience, and, to capture their immediacy, she first sketched what she saw. She had developed this technique in her early illustrated diaries from Galiano Island and during her years with the Canadian Women's Army Corps (*W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*). The faces in the crowds are loosely drawn and devoid of detail, but the language of modern life is clear in the gestures of the bodies gathered together. When she was appointed an official war artist at the war's end, she continued to produce crowd scenes in her paintings—for example, in *CWACs on Leave in Amsterdam, September, 1945, 1946*.

When Lamb Bobak settled in Fredericton in the early 1960s, she often painted or was commissioned to record images of people gathered together in celebrations or leisure activities—for example, *Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969, or *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977.

By 1960, Molly Lamb Bobak was painting compositions of flowers in both watercolour and oil—and she continued to sketch flowers all her life. These images remain among the most popular of her paintings with collectors. She credited her interest in flowers and in watercolour to her husband, Bruno Bobak: “I think the reason I started painting watercolours was very simply because Bruno painted watercolours of flowers.”<sup>23</sup> His painting *Molly’s Garden*, n.d., attests to her talent in tending a garden—a skill she learned from her mother—but wildflowers were her real passion. As she noted: “It’s the rambling flowers that fascinate me. That’s why I love New Brunswick so much—it’s full of wild, hardy flowers.”<sup>24</sup>



LEFT: Paul Cézanne, *Still Life Flowers in a Vase*, 1888, oil on canvas, 46.5 x 70.5 cm, private collection. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, “A Jug of August Flowers,” 1977, colour illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978).



Although artists such as Paul Cézanne and Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) are famous for their images of water lilies, sunflowers, and irises, flower painting has traditionally been regarded as an acceptable genre for women. It has even been viewed as a lesser form of art than historical or religious subjects precisely because of its association with women’s interests and “gentility.”<sup>25</sup> Art critics might read Lamb Bobak’s focus on interiors and flowers as revealing her respect for gender roles, but, to her, flowers were simply “the most pure things that I paint.”<sup>26</sup> As an independent woman, she expressed her sheer joy in nature and painted the world as she saw it.

Lamb Bobak also rendered her flower subjects in a variety of styles. In *White Tulips*, 1956, for example, she veered toward the abstract. She likened her flower images to her paintings of crowds, describing both as studies of forms in space: “Flowers are like crowds,” she said, “they move in the wind. You don’t organize them. . . . You paint them as they are.”<sup>27</sup> In this way she conferred an intellectual and modernist treatment on her flower studies.





Molly Lamb Bobak, *White Tulips*, 1956, oil on canvas, 61.9 x 91.4 cm, Visual Arts Collection, McGill University Library, Montreal.

Perhaps Lamb Bobak's greatest achievements as a painter were the singular vision and keen observation she brought to her scenes of modern life. Her vivid scenes of local community events made a unique contribution to painting in New Brunswick. Her approach was markedly different from the social realism of painters such as Miller Brittain, who, for the most part, depicted working-class scenes. What stands out in all her work—flowers, interiors, still-life compositions, and community groupings—is her love for the beauty of ordinary life.





# STYLE & TECHNIQUE

During her long and illustrious career, Molly Lamb Bobak worked primarily in oil or watercolour, but also produced drawings, prints, and illustrations. Most of her artwork presents recognizable subject matter, but her depictions of crowd scenes, still-life compositions (including flowers), and interiors reveal her interest in the formal qualities of painting—line, space, perspective, and the terrain between representation and abstraction. Although influenced by other modernist artists in Canada and abroad, she developed a style distinctively her own.



## FORM AND REPRESENTATION

In all her work, whether drawings, paintings, or prints, Molly Lamb Bobak combined representation of the scene before her with close attention to the formal qualities of artmaking—colour, brushwork, texture, line, and composition. This determination to portray daily life using highly professional techniques led her to produce a unique body of work in Canadian art. To achieve her signature style, Lamb Bobak challenged herself by pushing these formal qualities of painting in different directions. Her drawings, illustrated diaries, oil paintings, and particularly her watercolours are all created by a confident hand.

The idea that a painting must succeed as an arrangement of elements before it can succeed as a representation of something else is a central tenet of modernist art, according to critics Roger Fry (1866–1934), Clive Bell (1881–1964), Herbert Read (1893–1968), Walter Abell (1897–1956), and Clement Greenberg (1909–1994). As the post-Impressionist painter Maurice Denis (1870–1943) explained in a manifesto in 1890, “Remember that a picture, before it is a picture of a battle horse, a nude woman, or some story, is essentially a flat surface covered in colours arranged in a certain order.”<sup>1</sup>



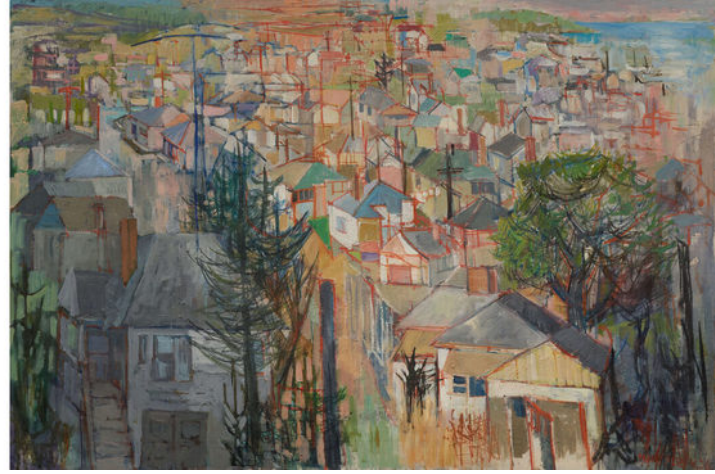
LEFT: Jack Shadbolt, *Seaport Abstraction*, 1933, graphite and watercolour on watercolour paper, 56.8 x 38.6 cm, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver.  
RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951, oil, gouache, and watercolour on paperboard, 81.3 x 60.8 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



Lamb Bobak was keenly aware of art theory and how it applied to her work. Her father, Harold Mortimer-Lamb (1872–1970), had discussed Fry's writings in particular with visitors to their home well before she began her official art education. At the Vancouver School of Art she was again exposed to these aesthetic trends when she studied with Jack Shadbolt (1909–1998), with whom she remained in dialogue until his death. Although her style was markedly different from his and she never fully embraced abstraction, he had a significant influence on her work. He guided her toward key concerns in modernist painting first by introducing her to the work of Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) and, in the 1950s, by encouraging her to explore compositional elements such as line, tone, and colour.

When Lamb Bobak returned to live in Vancouver following the Second World War and felt frustrated because her art had not advanced beyond the observational work she had produced as a war artist, Shadbolt advised her to focus on formal qualities—to open the way toward abstraction. In *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951, she emphasized such values to the point where the image, though primarily a study of lines and shapes, is still recognizably the

shelves in a corner of a bakery. In *New Housing Project*, 1956, Lamb Bobak treats line and composition in a manner similar to Cézanne in his *Gardanne*, 1885–86. Her paintings from this period come closest to abstraction, though she never abandoned representation.



LEFT: Paul Cézanne, *Gardanne*, 1885–86, oil on canvas, 64.8 x 100.3 cm, Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *New Housing Project*, 1956, oil on canvas, 88.8 x 127.4 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Even when abstraction and conceptual art took hold throughout much of the Canadian and international art worlds, Lamb Bobak kept working in her customary figurative style. Over the years she took risks to advance her technique, particularly in her experiments with different perspectives in her crowd scenes (*Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969, and *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977). On a few occasions, she veered toward abstraction—for example, in *Black Rocks, Caesaria*, 1985—but her subject matter was always recognizable. On one occasion she acknowledged that, except in her book illustrations, she had suppressed her natural impulses toward narrative because some local commentators found the “literal quality” in her work “obnoxious”; they had dismissed her tea-party images for “telling a story” about people.<sup>2</sup> She succeeded in developing her own distinctive style combining representation with sophisticated and evolving technique.

### A PAINTER OF MODERN LIFE

With her subject matter, Molly Lamb Bobak’s choices align with the ideas of the French poet and critic Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867), who, in 1863, argued that modernity, in contrast to classical ideals, required an artist be a “man [*sic*] of the world, man of the crowd”—a painter of modern life.<sup>3</sup> Lamb Bobak described how, as a young mother in Oslo, she sketched from the back of a car to capture the mood of people streaming through a city square. Later, she worked some of these quick drawings into finished paintings in the studio—as in *Oslo Street*, 1961.





Molly Lamb Bobak, *Oslo*, 1960, charcoal on wove paper, 41.9 x 54.7 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Similarly, her sketches of the 1976 official visit of Queen Elizabeth II to New Brunswick prove that she still jotted down impressions of fleeting moments in her sketchbook (see *John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977). These charcoal or ink drawings, complete with colour notes, served as an *aide memoire* for the fifty works she produced in her studio the following year.

All her scenes capture a moment from some lived, communal experience—crowds skating (*Rink Theme—Skaters*, 1969), dancing (*The Legislative Ball*, 1986), strolling on the beach (*British Columbia Beach*, 1993), filling public squares, or attending convocations. They achieve a careful balance of form, colour, and space, creating a clear, rationalized vision of moving scenes that are intentionally devoid of narrative.

Lamb Bobak's style may have been influenced by Pegi Nicol MacLeod (1904–1949), whom she met during the war years. Nicol MacLeod's *Manhattan Cycle*, 1947–49, painted near her New York City apartment on East 88th Street, also features a colourful rush of people. Although both women shared an interest in subject matter, they differed in their treatment: Nicol MacLeod's *Christmas Tree and Skaters, Rockefeller Plaza*, 1946, fills the frame with figures painted in twisting, dramatic strokes, while the crowd of figures in Lamb Bobak's *March to University*, n.d., is specific and ordered as the scene unravels around it. Lamb Bobak herself did not see a



close relationship in their art, though she appreciated Nicol MacLeod's work.<sup>4</sup> She described her colleague as "an outward, swirling kind of painter" whose work was "wilder . . . less controlled" than her own.<sup>5</sup>



LEFT: Pegi Nicol MacLeod, *Christmas Tree and Skaters, Rockefeller Plaza*, 1946, oil over graphite on laid paper, 61 x 47.8 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *March to University*, n.d., oil on canvas, 55.5 x 75.5 cm, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton.

Lamb Bobak's crowd paintings were highly sought after during her lifetime, but she struggled to identify their appeal. She thought these compositions were somehow less substantive than her other work: "There is nothing threatening in my subject matter. Sometimes, I worry if I have anything to say, truly, because I just see something and I paint it, without thinking beyond the visual thing, the movement of the people and the colour and so on. And I have to work hard to get that."<sup>6</sup> Despite her reservations, Lamb Bobak had achieved the goal Baudelaire had set for artists in pursuing the idea of modernity: to capture the "ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent half of art."<sup>7</sup> This working method was rapidly taken up by most of the Impressionist painters—Claude Monet (1840–1926) and James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) in particular. In mastering these same techniques, Lamb Bobak developed the skills needed to gauge, understand, and appreciate the whole big scene and to comprehend what it is to be modern.

### COLOUR, TEXTURE, AND SPACE

Throughout her career, Molly Lamb Bobak continued to be drawn to the work of European modernists. Despite the stylistic continuity evident in her oeuvre, she was open to multiple influences in her handling of colour and texture—to Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), J.M.W. Turner (1775–1851), and Gustav Klimt (1862–1918). *On the Beach*,



LEFT: Édouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1882, oil on canvas, 96 x 130 cm, Courtauld Institute, London. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Warm Pub*, n.d., oil on canvas, 61 x 76.2 cm, private collection.



1959, for example, is evocative of Klimt's *The Kiss*, 1907–8. Her evolution as a painter coincided with multiple grant-supported trips she and her husband, Bruno Bobak (1923–2012), took to Europe from the 1950s to the 1970s, where they sketched and painted *en plein air* in Spain, France, Norway, and England. Her *Black Rocks, Caesaria*, 1985, bears some resemblance to Turner's seascapes in its dramatic play of sea and sky. *Warm Pub*, n.d., produced likely after an extended stay in Europe, shows the influence of Édouard Manet (1832–1883) in the handling and fluidity of paint. *Warm Pub* recalls Manet's famous canvas *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1882. In her rendering of the pub, Lamb Bobak appears to emulate and further abstract the brushwork of Manet, and in so doing reveals the nature of painting itself: a flat surface covered in colours arranged in a certain order. A further parallel can be drawn between Manet's barmaid and Lamb Bobak's *Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps*, 1946. Both women share a forlorn quality that is achieved by their respective gazes, which do not engage the viewer in either instance. Charmaine A. Nelson cites Lamb Bobak's sensitive portrait of the introspective *Private Roy* for successfully capturing an acute sense of alienation that a black woman must have felt while serving in the predominantly white CWAC.<sup>8</sup>

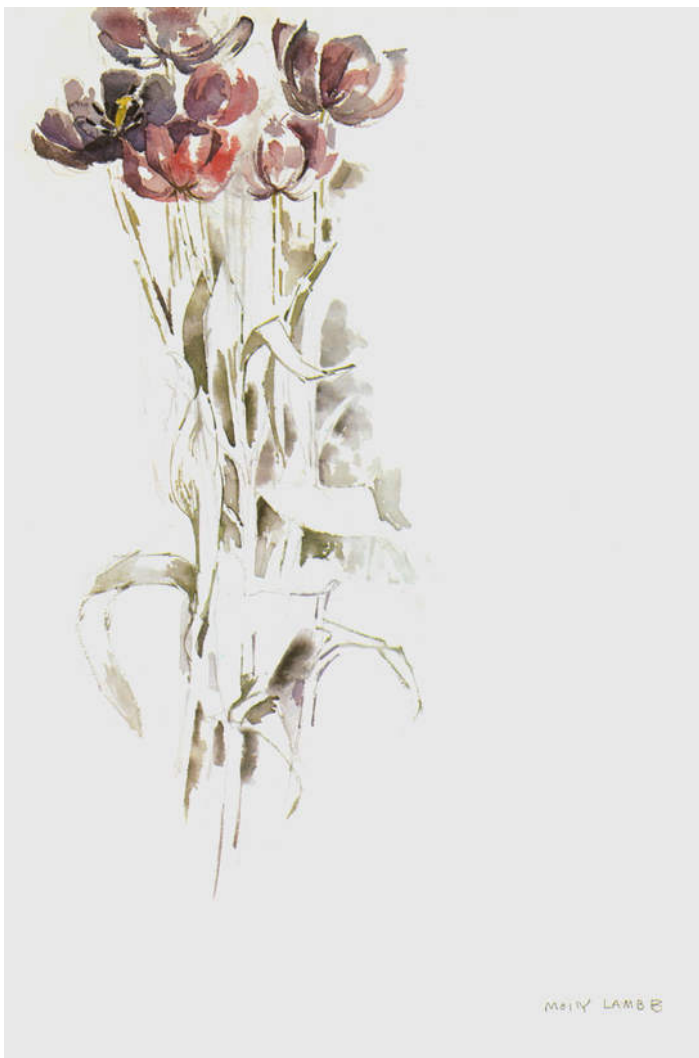


Molly Lamb Bobak, *Corsini Palace, Florence*, 1983, oil on canvas, 76.6 x 101.3 cm, collection of Paul Sabourin.



Building on these influences, Lamb Bobak developed a style and technique all her own. The subdued palette and geometric, almost cubist compositions she painted in Vancouver in the 1950s (*A Bakeshop*, *Saint-Léonard*, 1951) gave way to the free brushwork and instinctive use of colour of her later style. Her landscapes, still lifes, and interiors from the 1960s onward employed looser compositional structures featuring a sharp freshness of colour. *Corsini Palace*, *Florence*, 1983, and *Interior with Moroccan Carpet*, 1993, two later interiors painted in oil, present a daring purity of colour.

These interior compositions, like her crowd scenes and flower images—for example, the gesturally rendered “Red Poppies,” 1977—are characterized by rational form, sensual detail, and unworked, exuberant colour. As she said about her watercolour *Cosmos*, 1977, included in *Wild Flowers of Canada* (1978): “I love to paint them. In the fall, I race against the first killing frost to put down all they suggest to me. I have an old brush with a few hairs left in it which helps me say something about the elegance of these crisp-growing fronds.”<sup>9</sup>



LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, “Tulips,” 1977, colour illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978). RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, “Red Poppies,” 1977, colour illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978).



## OTHER MEDIA

While Molly Lamb Bobak considered herself to be primarily a painter and was portrayed in the art press as such, she experimented in other media at different points in her career. In addition to her illustrated diaries and watercolours like *Cosmos*, 1977, she produced a small selection of prints and illustrated books by other writers.

The majority of Lamb Bobak's paintings are in oil, but she used watercolour where she thought a more delicate and transparent treatment would be preferable. Watercolour painting had peaked in popularity during the nineteenth century, but some modernist artists continued to experiment with it for sketching and for independent works. David Milne (1881–1953) was one of them—an artist Lamb Bobak admitted had influenced her work. Initially she used watercolour pigments to add colour to sketches and drawings, but she credited her husband, Bruno Bobak, with encouraging her to explore this medium more thoroughly.



David Milne, *Storm Over the Islands No. 3*, 1951, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 28 x 37 cm, Art Gallery of Windsor, Ontario.

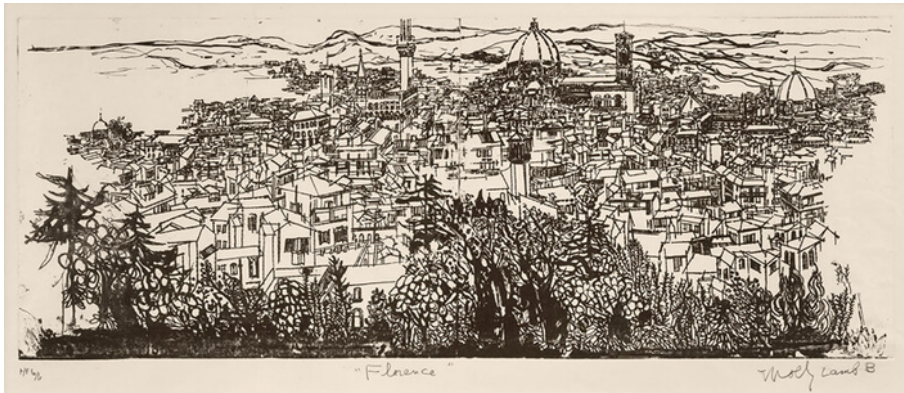
She came to value the immediacy offered by watercolour, in contrast to the rethinking and correction allowed by oil. As David P. Silcox notes in his foreword to *Wild Flowers of Canada*:

The paintings are at once meticulous and spontaneous. They have a consuming vitality which their delicacy does not diminish. They have a balance which their seeming disorder does not destroy. They have an immediacy of vision which is constantly renewed with each viewing. They are an act of love.<sup>10</sup>

In a televised interview for the CBC in 1993, Lamb Bobak described her preference for rendering flowers in watercolour as a way to capture the natural movement of the delicate blossoms.<sup>11</sup>

Printmaking makes fewer appearances in Lamb Bobak's work, though the prints she made reveal her graphic sensibility in complicated compositions of crowds and grouped buildings. Lithographs from the late 1950s and early 1960s, including *Florence*, n.d., and *The School Yard*, 1962, show how she was able to transfer her feeling for crowded, active space from oils to prints.





LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *Florence*, n.d., lithograph, 44 x 82.1 cm, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton. RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The School Yard*, 1962, lithograph on wove paper, 77.5 x 106.8 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Her serigraph *The Ball*, 1986, picks up the general composition of her canvas *The Legislative Ball*, 1986. Both depict dancers whose swiftly rendered forms make them float across the picture space; although the ballroom is anchored by three architectural elements—two windows and a door through which a Christmas tree is visible—its shape is not precisely defined.

While reviewers responded positively to her prints, Lamb Bobak mentioned her printmaking only in passing. In a 1962 interview she said she had intended to take classes in that medium during her stay in Oslo, but there is no record that she did. In 1978 she talked of helping her husband with his lithographic work and indicated she had done some herself, “in England, of course,” though her output was small.<sup>12</sup>

Lamb Bobak’s illustrations for children’s books by Frances Itani, Sheree Fitch, and her own daughter, Anny Scoones, show clear connections to her early diaries from Galiano Island and the war years (*W110278*), particularly in their humour and sense of fun. They also display resemblances and differences with her artwork. Readers expect book illustrations to enhance the story, but since the 1950s Lamb Bobak had deliberately avoided using narrative in her paintings. This caution comes through in her images for Itani’s *Linger by the Sea* (1979), where she follows the storyline but remains remarkably detached, rendering the main characters as loosely defined figures.

In Fitch’s *Toes in My Nose and Other Poems* (1987) and *Merry-Go-Day* (1991), Lamb Bobak achieved a satisfying balance among all the elements: narrative, character, and the use of different techniques to express feelings. In “The Moon’s a Banana,” for example, a sleeping child forms the central image, but the dog and the teddy bear in the far right of the frame invite readers to extend their imagination beyond the words in the text. In Scoones’s *A Tale of Merlin the Billy Dog* (2000), the goat at the centre of the story frolics with his new friend (a black Labrador puppy), curls up to sleep, and at one hilarious point is menaced by a flock of “chicken bullies.” These and other later illustrations, act as comical extensions of the text they illustrate.





LEFT: Molly Lamb Bobak, watercolour illustration in Frances Itani, *Linger by the Sea* (1979). RIGHT: Molly Lamb Bobak, illustration (*detail*) in Anny Scoones, *A Tale of Merlin the Billy Dog* (2000).





# WHERE TO SEE

The works of Molly Lamb Bobak are held in public and private collections internationally. Although the following institutions hold the works listed below, they may not always be on view. This list contains only the works held in public collections discussed and illustrated in this book; many other works by Lamb Bobak may be found in public collections across Canada.

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## ART GALLERY OF GREATER VICTORIA

1040 Moss Street  
Victoria, British Columbia  
Canada  
250-384-4171  
aggv.ca



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *North Vancouver Ferry*, 1950**  
Oil on fibreboard  
59.8 x 50.4 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Oslo Street*, 1961**  
Pastel on paper  
47.3 x 62.4 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Studio*, 1956**  
Oil on board  
60.5 x 45 cm

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## BEAVERBROOK ART GALLERY

703 Queen Street  
Fredericton, New Brunswick  
Canada  
506-458-2028  
beaverbrookartgallery.org



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Florence*, n.d.**  
Lithograph  
44 x 82.1 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *March to University*, n.d.**  
Oil on canvas  
55.5 x 75.5 cm

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## BURNABY ART GALLERY

6344 Deer Lake Avenue  
Burnaby, British Columbia  
Canada  
604-297-4422  
[burnaby.ca/Things-To-Do/Arts-and-Heritage/Burnaby-Art-Gallery.html](http://burnaby.ca/Things-To-Do/Arts-and-Heritage/Burnaby-Art-Gallery.html)



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *British Columbia Beach*, 1993**

Lithograph  
57.2 x 38.1 cm

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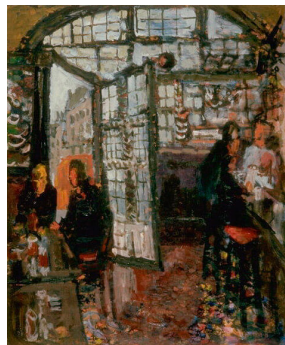
## CANADA COUNCIL ART BANK

921 St. Laurent Boulevard  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
613-566-4414  
[artbank.ca](http://artbank.ca)



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Living Room*, 1973**

Oil on Masonite  
80 x 121 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Pub, Sloane Square*, 1970**

Oil on Masonite  
100 x 120 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Rink Theme-Skaters*, 1969**

Oil on Masonite  
151.5 x 62.4 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Shediac Beach (N.B.)*, 1972**

Oil on Masonite  
56 x 76 cm

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## CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM

1 Vimy Place  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
819-776-7000 or 1-800-555-5621  
warmuseum.ca



**Molly Lamb, *Bremen Ruins at Night*, 1945**  
Charcoal and ink on paper  
30.5 x 45.7 cm



**Molly Lamb, *Canteen, Nijmegen, Holland*, 1945**  
Oil and ink on canvas  
51.2 x 61.1 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *CWACs on Leave in Amsterdam, September*, 1945, 1946**  
Oil on canvas  
60.9 x 76.2 cm



**Molly Lamb, *CWACs Sorting Mail*, n.d.**  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 76.3 cm



**Molly Lamb, *Gas Drill*, 1944**  
Oil on canvas  
68.8 x 86.8 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps*, 1946**  
Oil on fibreboard  
76.4 x 60.8 cm

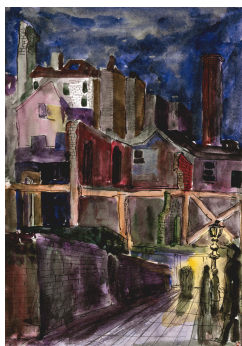


**Molly Lamb, *Ruins, Emmerich, Germany*, 1945**  
Watercolour, ink, and graphite on paper  
35.5 x 25.4 cm



**Molly Lamb, *Ruins, Emmerich, Germany, Oct. 1945*, 1945**  
Watercolour, ink, charcoal, and graphite on paper  
35.7 x 50.8 cm

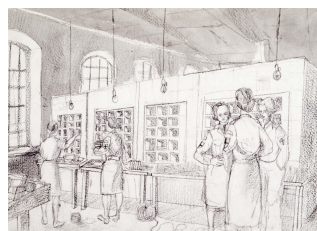




**Molly Lamb, *Ruins***  
*Holborn Street, London, 1945*  
Watercolour, ink, and graphite on paper  
35.4 x 25.3 cm



**Molly Lamb, *Signing Up for the Pacific*, 1945**  
Oil on canvas  
50.5 x 83.5 cm

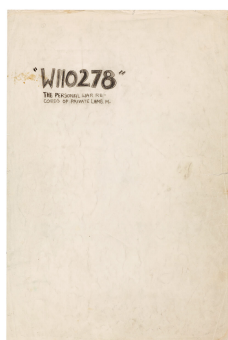


**Molly Lamb, *The Base Post Office, Lot, Belgium*, n.d.**  
Carbon pencil on paper  
25.3 x 35.7 cm

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## LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
bac-lac.gc.ca



**Molly Lamb, *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942-45**  
Pencil and watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper



**Molly Lamb, *The Daily Chore Girl - Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940**  
Watercolour and pencil on wove paper

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## MACKENZIE ART GALLERY

University of Regina  
3475 Albert Street  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
Canada  
306-584-4250  
mackenzieartgallery.ca



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Interior with Moroccan Carpet*, 1991**

Oil on canvas  
91 x 122 cm

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## NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

380 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
613-990-1985  
gallery.ca



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951**

Oil, gouache, and  
watercolour on  
paperboard  
81.3 x 60.8 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire*, 1951**

Oil, gouache, and  
watercolour on  
cardboard  
60.6 x 81.3 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *New Housing Project*, 1956**

Oil on canvas  
88.8 x 127.4 cm



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Oslo*, 1960**

Charcoal on wove  
paper  
41.9 x 54.7 cm

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**Molly Lamb Bobak, *The School Yard*, 1962**

Lithograph on wove paper  
77.5 x 106.8 cm

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## OTTAWA ART GALLERY

50 Mackenzie King Bridge  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
613-233-8699  
oaggao.ca



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *November 11*, 1971**

Oil on board  
122 x 102 cm

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**Molly Lamb, *Untitled (Christmas Card)*, c.1995**

Grahpite, ink, and watercolour on paper  
11.43 x 15.875 cm

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# MOLLY LAMB BOBAK

Life & Work by Michelle Gewurtz

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## VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

750 Hornby Street  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
604-662-4719  
Canada  
[vanartgallery.bc.ca](http://vanartgallery.bc.ca)



**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Classroom*, 1951**  
Oil on canvas  
72.6 x 61.8 cm

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**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Portrait of Joan Lowndes*, 1952**  
Oil on wood panel  
91.5 x 44 cm

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**Molly Lamb Bobak, *Still Life Revisited*, 1955**  
Oil on canvas  
91.5 x 68.8 cm

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## NOTES

### BIOGRAPHY

1. Molly Lamb Bobak's birth date is often given as 1922 because, early on, her mother made the change with the explanation, "Molly didn't want to grow up." It wasn't until Lamb Bobak was in her eighties that she admitted she was actually two years older than everyone thought (information from Anny Scoones, Molly Lamb Bobak's daughter).

2. See Harold Amos, *Harold Mortimer-Lamb: The Art Lover* (Victoria: TorchWood Editions, 2013).

3. Molly Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1978), 17-20; and Brian Foss and Cindy Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 28-29.

4. Although Williams was born Alice Salter Price in England, she changed her name for unknown reasons once she arrived in Canada.

5. Amos, *Harold Mortimer-Lamb*, 60-61. Lamb's two daughters with Kate had both died, Molly in infancy and Dolly at the age of ten. Mortimer-Lamb was particularly fond of Dolly and often photographed her.

6. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 16.

7. Amos, *Harold Mortimer-Lamb*, 69.

8. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 10.

9. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 10-11.

10. Lamb Bobak later recounted this story about her father's influence on Emily Carr: "He and Marius Barbeau, the anthropologist, were responsible for getting Emily her first major show at the National Gallery. Dad and Emily got on very well, for a time at least. He bought a lot of her work before the Montreal dealers had ever heard of her, but later on when Dad felt he had too many Emily Carrs, he sold some of them at a profit. She found out and ended the friendship. He did a lot for her, though, and it's a pity she got so angry. The famous photograph of Emily in her skullcap, leaning forward on her arms, was taken by Dad" (Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 20).

11. In a letter to Arthur Lismer dated January, 28, 1926, Mortimer-Lamb enlisted the help of the influential teacher and member of the Group of Seven, asking him: "Could you arrange to send us a small exhibition of the work of the Group—one example of each member would serve" (Harold Mortimer-Lamb fonds, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia).

12. Amos, *Harold Mortimer-Lamb*, 77-85.

13. Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 28.

14. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 12.

15. Bobak quoted in Richmond, "Molly Lamb Bobak," 25.

16. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 25.

17. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 29.

18. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 24.

19. Vera Weatherbie is renowned for breaking up Frederick Varley's marriage, although this rumour has never been proven. When Varley and Jock Macdonald founded the British Columbia College of Arts, Weatherbie followed Varley there, as she did again, later, after he left his family and moved to Lynn Valley. Varley painted many portraits of Vera, perhaps the best known of which is *Dharana*, 1932. For an account of Mortimer-Lamb's marriage to Weatherbie and Molly Lamb's reaction, see "Breakup" in Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 29-32. See also Amos, *Harold Mortimer Lamb*, 95-107, 118, 138, and 167; and Anny Scoones, *Last Dance in Shediac: Memories of Mum, Molly Lamb Bobak* (Victoria: TouchWood Editions, 2015), 117-19.

20. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 24.

21. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 14.

22. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 37.

23. Molly Lamb, "I Love the Army!" *Canadian Art* 2, no. 4 (April 1945): 147-48.

24. The diary was fully digitized by Library and Archives Canada in 2015 to mark the seventieth anniversary of Lamb Bobak's appointment as Canada's first woman war artist.

25. Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 33.

26. It seems that Charles Comfort, another member of the Canadian War Artists Selection Committee, viewed the diary during the war. He writes in the foreword of *Double Duty*: "I first saw this unique diary in its original form and was much impressed by its unorthodox format. The essence of the diary and the events, the humour and the reality it conveys brings us Molly's zest for life and her special way of looking at things" (Carolyn Gossage, ed., *Double Duty: Sketches and Diaries of Molly Lamb Bobak, Canadian War Artist* [Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992], 7).

27. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 44.



28. H.O. McCurry wrote to Molly Lamb on September 28, 1944, advising her to send her work to the National Gallery so she could avoid hitchhiking again to Ottawa (Molly Lamb Bobak file, Volume 1, Canadian War Museum).

29. McCurry to Lamb, November 1943.

30. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 45.

31. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 56.

32. She also details her visit to the MoMA and discussions about art with her travelling companion Corporal Jones (see "W110278," the Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/second-world-war/molly-lamb-bobak/Pages/pages-141-160-molly-bobak.aspx>).

33. The committee had been established in 1941 by Vincent Massey and the director of the National Gallery of Canada, H.O. McCurry, under the auspices of the Department of National Defence.

34. Clark recorded the activities of the Women's Division of the Armed Forces stationed at the air base in Trenton, Ontario; Duncan drew and painted CWACs in munitions factories. Duncan, like Lamb, had petitioned the CWASC for an appointment as an official war artist, but was denied, perhaps because she was not already in uniform.

35. Quoted in Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 106.

36. Quoted in Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 106.

37. See Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 24.

38. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 9.

39. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 38.

40. In her memoir, Molly Lamb Bobak mentions a few trips to Paris when she spent time with Joseph Plaskett. In 1960, for instance, Air France hired her as a guide for a culture tour. See Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 76-77 and 81-84.

41. Marjory Donaldson, "The Fredericton Years," in *Bruno Bobak: The Full Palette*, ed. Bernard Riordon (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 2006), 71.

42. See Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 80.

43. Bruno Bobak liked to joke that when the University of New Brunswick appointed him as artist-in-residence in 1960 and, later, hired him as the director of the University Art Centre, they got a good deal: two artists for the price of one (Herménégilde Chiasson, "Introduction," *Bruno Bobak*, ed. Riordon, 11-13).

44. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 8.
45. Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 3.
46. Quoted in Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 8.
47. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 14.
48. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 18.
49. Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 50.
50. Quoted in Joan Murray, *The Best Contemporary Canadian Art* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1987), 16.
51. Scoones, *Last Dance in Shediac*, 147.

#### KEY WORKS: UNTITLED (VANCOUVER)

1. Molly Lamb Bobak interview with Cindy Richmond, quoted in Brian Foss and Cindy Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 33-34.

#### KEY WORKS: W110278: THE PERSONAL WAR RECORDS OF PRIVATE LAMB, M.

1. W110278, vol. 1, 17 (see Library and Archives Canada, Molly Lamb Bobak Diary [pages 21 – 40] <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/second-world-war/molly-lamb-bobak/Pages/pages-21-40-molly-bobak.aspx>).
2. Quoted in Amber Lloydlangston, "Molly Lamb Bobak," in *The Artist Herself*, ed. Alicia Boutilier and Tobi Bruce (Kingston and Hamilton, ON: Agnes Etherington Art Centre & Art Gallery of Hamilton), 108.

#### KEY WORKS: RUINS OF EMMERICH, GERMANY

1. Quoted in Brian Foss and Cindy Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 106.
2. See "3rd Canadian Infantry Division," [canadiansoldiers.com](http://canadiansoldiers.com).
3. Lamb admired other artists who could record war's horrors. Her favourite painting from the First World War was the emotionally powerful *For What?*, 1917-19, by Frederick Varley (1881-1969), depicting a cart filled with dead bodies collected from the battlefield (Anny Scoones, *Last Dance in Shediac: Memories of Mum, Molly Lamb Bobak* [Victoria: TouchWood Editions, 2015], 47).

#### KEY WORKS: PRIVATE ROY, CANADIAN WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS

1. Private Roy has been identified as Eva May Roy (1916-1990), who served in England and the Netherlands during the war.
2. Charmaine A. Nelson, *Representing the Black Female Subject in Western Art*





(New York: Routledge, 2010), 29.

3. Nelson, *Representing the Black Female Subject in Western Art*, 29.

4. See Alan C. Elder and Ian Thom, *A Modern Life: Art and Design in British Columbia, 1945–1960* (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 2004) 41.

## KEY WORKS: A BAKESHOP, SAINT-LÉONARD

1. See Brian Ross and Cindy Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 40.

## KEY WORKS: STILL LIFE REVISITED

1. See *Il Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo* catalogue, 99. R.H. Hubbard's introduction for Canada singles out Molly Lamb Bobak for the vitality of her compositions. The exhibition showcased several Canadian painters, including Jack Shadbolt, Takao Tanabe, Louis Muhlstock, Paul-Émile Borduas, Goodridge Roberts, and Marion Scott. Although the date of *Still Life* aligns with the picture shown at São Paulo, the dimensions appear to differ, and the provenance of the work, now in the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery Collection at the University of British Columbia, is unclear.

## KEY WORKS: FLORENCE

1. Dodie Finlayson, "One-Man Show Gay, Pleasant," *Vancouver Province*, August 31, 1963.

2. Molly Lamb Bobak, interview by Wendy Mesley, *Midday*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (television), November 29, 1993.

3. Kay Kritzwiser, "Lamb Shares a Passion with Ferdinand the Bull," *Globe and Mail*, November 27, 1978.

## KEY WORKS: OSLO STREET

1. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 8.

2. Molly Lamb Bobak to George Kidd, November 14, 1961, Artist file, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia.

## KEY WORKS: RINK THEME—SKATERS

1. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 12.

2. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 15.

3. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 12–13.

## KEY WORKS: JOHN, DICK, AND THE QUEEN

1. Anny Scoones, *Last Dance in Shediac: Memories of Mum, Molly Lamb Bobak* (Victoria: TouchWood Editions, 2015), 80.

2. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 14.

#### KEY WORKS: WILD FLOWERS OF CANADA: IMPRESSIONS AND SKETCHES OF A FIELD ARTIST

1. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 17.

2. Molly Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1978), 16–17.

3. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 14.

#### KEY WORKS: BLACK ROCKS, CAESARIA

1. The United Jewish Appeal organizes trips to Israel every year in cities across Canada and the United States. Molly Lamb Bobak was invited on one such trip by a friend, and she travelled there without her husband, Bruno Bobak (Anny Scoones, interview with author, January 2018).

2. Molly Lamb Bobak to Jack Shadbolt, December 19, 1984, quoted in Cindy Richmond, ed., *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 54.

#### SIGNIFICANCE & CRITICAL ISSUES

1. Canadian War Artists Selection Committee, Minutes of June 2, 1943, meeting, quoted in Brian Foss and Cindy Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 100. Foss documents that the request from Alma Duncan in August 1943 to be designated as a war artist was denied by the committee, who felt there was no need to document the women's division of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army, or the Royal Canadian Air Force.

2. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 8.

3. Discussed in Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 108–9. Foss acknowledges that the optimism and group activity in Lamb's drawings and sketches are likely due to restricted gender roles in the army. Moreover, the activities she recorded align with her own interests.

4. Pegi Nicol MacLeod, "Recording the Women's Services," *Canadian Art* 2, no. 2 (1945): 49.

5. Tanya Schaap, "'Girl Takes Drastic Step': Molly Lamb Bobak's W110278—The Diary of a CWAC" in *Working Memory: Women and Work in World War II*, ed. Marlene Kadar and Jeanne Perreault (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015), 185.



6. See Dominic Hardy, Annie Gérin, and Jean-Phillippe Uzel, eds., "Humour in the Visual Arts and Visual Culture: Practices, Theories, and Histories / L'humour dans les arts et la culture visuels : pratiques, théories et histoires," *RACAR: revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review* 37, no. 1 (2012): 1-9.
7. Slavvy, who appears throughout the diary, refers to Lamb's presentation of herself as a slave, working as a maid at an inn on Galiano Island.
8. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays* (London: Phaidon, 1995), 1.
9. Molly Lamb Bobak, "I Love the Army" in *Canadian Art* 2, no. 4 (April 1945): 147-48.
10. Molly Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1978), 41.
11. Quoted in Carolyn Gossage, ed., *Double Duty: Sketches and Diaries of Molly Lamb Bobak, Canadian War Artist* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), 92.
12. With thanks to Hilary Letwin, curator of *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town* at the Burnaby Art Gallery, for sharing her memories of a conversation she had with Ian Thom, curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery.
13. For a comprehensive discussion on this topic, see Virginia Nixon, "The Concept of 'Regionalism' in Canadian Art History," *Journal of Canadian Art History / Annales d'histoire de l'art Canadien* 10, no. 1 (1987): 30-41.
14. See Gordon Smith, "The Vancouver Years," in *Bruno Bobak: The Full Palette*, ed. Bernard Riordon (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 2006), 48-49. See also "The New Design Gallery," <http://www.westvancouver.com/the-new-design-gallery/10954/> and documentation of the Bobaks' involvement in the Vancouver Art Scene of the 1950s in "The New Design Gallery in the Frontier: 1955-1966." (<https://westvancouvermuseum.ca/exhibitions/new-design-gallery-frontier-1955-1966>).
15. Art historian Doris Shadbolt wrote: "Among these individuals it is not easy to find a great deal in common. But there is, I think, one strain, running like a deep undercurrent through much British Columbia painting—a strain of nature romanticism" (quoted in *Vancouver Art and Artists, 1931-1983*, exhibition catalogue [Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery], 90).
16. Alan Jarvis, quoted in Alan C. Elder and Ian M. Thom, *A Modern Life: Art and Design in British Columbia, 1945-1960*, exhibition catalogue (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 2004), 46. In 1955 Hubbard had stated: "Now that the Montreal school is in temporary abeyance ... the leadership has been assumed by Vancouver, where a whole group of interesting painters is now active" (quoted in *Vancouver Art and Artists*, 90).

17. Herménégilde Chiasson, "Introduction," in *Bruno Bobak*, ed. Riordon, 11–13. Chiasson, a poet, is a former lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick.
18. Chiasson, "Introduction," 13.
19. Marjory Donaldson, "The Fredericton Years," in *Bruno Bobak*, ed. Riordon, 79.
20. For a full listing of Molly Lamb Bobak's solo and group exhibitions, see Brian Foss and Cindy Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective* (Regina: MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1993), 228–32.
21. Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*.
22. Hilary Letwin, *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town* (Burnaby: Burnaby Art Gallery, 2018), 4.
23. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 12. Robert Fulford wrote in *Canadian Art* that Bruno Bobak's images were "light, delicate paintings of flowers, often primroses, which seem to hang gracefully in space, attached to nothing" (quoted in Foss and Richmond, *Molly Lamb Bobak*, 41).
24. Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 40.
25. Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock track the associations among still life, flower painting, and an ideology that diminishes women's capacities (see Parker and Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art, and Ideology* [London: I.B. Tauris, 2013], 50–81). Anne M. Wagner notes, "Making art 'as a woman' seems best understood as a historically contingent act with different cultural weight and allure at different moments in time" (Wagner, *Three Artists [Three Women]: Modernism and the Art of Hesse, Krasner and O'Keefe* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996], 13).
26. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 15.
27. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 15.

## STYLE & TECHNIQUE

1. Maurice Denis, *Définition du néo-traditionnisme*, quoted in Simon Wilson and Jessica Lack, *The Tate Guide to Modern Art Terms* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2008), 82.
2. Ian Lumsden, interview with Molly Lamb Bobak, in Ian Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings*, exhibition catalogue (Fredericton: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, 1977), 14.
3. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1995) 5.





4. Mary Barker, "Artist, Lecturer and Housewife ... Molly Bobak Has Had Varied Career," *Fredericton Gleaner*, March 4, 1961. Barker quotes Lamb Bobak's opinion of Nicol MacLeod's work from the Second World War: "She did some really first-rate things, which I think include some of her best work."
5. Interview in Lumsden, *The Queen Comes to New Brunswick*, 16.
6. Molly Lamb Bobak quoted in Brigid Grant, "An Interview with Molly Lamb Bobak," *Arts Atlantic* 12, no. 3 (Winter 1995), 37.
7. Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, 12. Baudelaire's famous essay focuses on a painter he calls Monsieur G, praising his work as that of "the painter of modern life." The painter in question has been identified as Constantin Guys (1802-1892), a Dutch-born French artist.
8. Charmaine A. Nelson, *Representing the Black Female Subject in Western Art* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 29.
9. Molly Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1978), 30.
10. Quoted in Lamb Bobak, *Wild Flowers of Canada*, 7.
11. Molly Lamb Bobak, interview by Wendy Mesley, *Midday*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (Television), November 29, 1993.
12. Kay Kritzweiser, "Lamb Shares a Passion with Ferdinand the Bull," *Globe and Mail*, November 27, 1978.

## GLOSSARY

### **Abell, Walter (American, 1897–1956)**

An art historian and critic who was, from 1928 to 1943, the first professor of Fine Arts at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Abell was a proponent of cultural democracy and the founder of the Maritime Art Association, which supported art programming and exhibitions throughout the region. He was a founding executive of the Federation of Canadian Artists, and his work helped establish a critical discourse around Canadian art.

### **abstract art**

Visual art that uses form, colour, line, and gestural marks in compositions that do not attempt to represent images of real things. Abstract art may interpret reality in an altered form, or depart from it entirely. Also called nonfigurative or nonrepresentational art.

### **Abstract Expressionism**

A style that flourished in New York in the 1940s and 1950s, defined by its combination of formal abstraction and self-conscious expression. The term describes a wide variety of work; among the most famous Abstract Expressionists are Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, and Willem de Kooning.

### **American Regionalism**

An art movement popular from the 1920s to 1950s. Based in the American heartland, its adherents created pastoral scenes that venerated a pre-industrial United States, inspired by their rural and small-town surroundings. Among the most celebrated American Regionalists are the painters John Steuart Curry, Grant Wood, and Thomas Hart Benton.

### **Amess, Fred (Canadian, 1909–1970)**

Born in London, England, Amess immigrated to Canada's West Coast as a young child. A painter, he was part of the first graduating class from the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts in 1929 and taught at the renamed Vancouver School of Art, where, in 1943, he founded the Art in Living Group with fellow faculty member B.C. Binning. Amess served as director of the Vancouver School of Art from 1952 to 1970.

### **Art Students League of New York**

A progressive art school established by artists for artists in 1875. By the turn of the twentieth century the Art Students League was attracting many students who would become central figures in contemporary American art. Teachers included William Merritt Chase, Thomas Eakins, and Robert Henri.

### **Baudelaire, Charles (French, 1821–1867)**

An influential poet and art critic who inspired the Symbolist movement and revelled in the sensual contradictions between the ruins of urban life and beauty, Baudelaire is perhaps best known for his 1857 poetry collection *Les fleurs du mal*, which explored taboos of bourgeois values. He is associated with philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin and the figures of the *flâneur* and the bohemian.



**Bayefsky, Aba (Canadian, 1923–2001)**

Commissioned as an Official War Artist for the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1944, Bayefsky was a painter and teacher at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto. In 1945 he documented the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp after its liberation. He remained committed to confronting anti-Semitism in his art for the remainder of his career and created a number of works exploring his own Jewish heritage. Bayefsky was awarded the Order of Canada in 1979.

**Bell, Clive (British, 1881–1964)**

An art critic and member of the Bloomsbury Group, Bell was among the first to promote the French Post-Impressionists in England. With Roger Fry, he was a proponent of formalism and developed the idea of “significant form” as a property common to all works of art, distinct from beauty and necessary to arousing emotional responses in viewers. Bell was married to British painter Vanessa Stephen, sister of the writer Virginia Woolf.

**Benton, Thomas Hart (American, 1889–1975)**

A painter, lithographer, and illustrator who believed strongly in art’s social function. Initially interested in abstraction, Benton soon rejected apolitical modernism, becoming a committed Regionalist and sought-after muralist. His monumental political narratives adorned numerous public and private buildings in his native Missouri, as well as in New York and Chicago.

**Binning, B.C. (Canadian, 1909–1976)**

Vancouver artist Bertram Charles (B.C.) Binning, one of the first Canadian modernist painters on the West Coast, was influenced by modernist architecture. A belief in the intermingling of art, architecture, and life led him to found, along with Fred Amess, the Art in Living Group at the Vancouver School of Art in 1943. He also founded the School of Fine Arts at the University of British Columbia in 1949.

**Bobak, Bruno (Canadian, 1923–2012)**

The youngest official Canadian war artist appointed during the Second World War, Bobak was a Polish-born painter and printmaker. Influenced by the European Expressionists, he is best known for his figure studies and, in the 1950s, became a prominent member of the postwar Vancouver art scene. He was married to fellow painter Molly Lamb Bobak and, from 1962 to 1988, served as director of the Art Centre at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton.

**British Columbia College of Arts**

The British Columbia College of Arts was a short-lived Vancouver institution founded by Jock MacDonald and Frederick Varley in 1933. Created after internal conflict and reduced pay forced its two founding members out of their teaching positions at the Vancouver School of Art, the college offered students multidisciplinary classes and took a modernist approach to aesthetics and artmaking. It closed in 1935 due to lack of funds.

**Brittain, Miller (Canadian, 1914–1968)**

Brittain first trained with Elizabeth Russell Holt, a central figure of the arts scene in Saint John, New Brunswick, before studying at the Art Students League of New York from 1930 to 1932. His drawings, paintings, watercolours, and murals reveal an enduring interest in social realism and psychology. Brittain was a founding member of the Federation of Canadian Artists.

**Carr, Emily (Canadian, 1871–1945)**

A pre-eminent B.C.-based artist and writer, Carr is renowned today for her bold and vibrant images of both the Northwest Coast landscape and its Native peoples. Educated in California, England, and France, she was influenced by a variety of modern art movements but ultimately developed a unique aesthetic style. She was one of the first West Coast artists to achieve national recognition. (See *Emily Carr: Life & Work* by Lisa Baldissera.)

**Clark, Paraskeva (Russian/Canadian, 1898–1986)**

An outspoken painter who advocated for the social role of the artist and Canadian and Russian cultural ties, Clark arrived in Toronto via Paris in 1931. Her subjects were still lifes, self-portraits, landscapes, and memories of her Russian home. Clark supported fundraising efforts for Spanish refugees during the Spanish Civil War and for the Canadian Aid to Russia Fund in 1942. (See *Paraskeva Clark: Life & Work* by Christine Boyanoski.)

**Colville, Alex (Canadian, 1920–2013)**

A painter, muralist, draftsman, and engraver whose highly representational images verge on the surreal. Colville's paintings typically depict everyday scenes of rural Canadian life imbued with an uneasy quality. Since his process was meticulous—the paint applied dot by dot—he produced only three or four paintings or serigraphs per year. (See *Alex Colville: Life & Work* by Ray Cronin.)

**Comfort, Charles (Canadian, 1900–1994)**

A major figure in twentieth-century Canadian art, who began his career as a commercial artist. He took up painting in his twenties, and became a member of the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour and the Canadian Group of Painters. Comfort served as director of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, from 1959 to 1965.

**Conceptual art**

Traced to the work of Marcel Duchamp but not codified until the 1960s, “Conceptual art” is a general term for art that emphasizes ideas over form. The finished product may even be physically transient, as with land art or performance art.

**Cubism**

A radical style of painting developed by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in Paris between 1907 and 1914, defined by the representation of numerous perspectives at once. Cubism is considered crucial to the history of modern art for its enormous international impact; famous practitioners also include Juan Gris and Francis Picabia.



**Curnoe, Greg (Canadian, 1936–1992)**

A central figure in London regionalism from the 1960s to the early 1990s, Curnoe was a painter, printmaker, and graphic artist who found inspiration in his life and his Southwestern Ontario surroundings. His wide-ranging art interests included Surrealism, Dada, Cubism, and the work of many individual artists, both historical and contemporary. (See *Greg Curnoe: Life & Work* by Judith Rodger.)

**Cézanne, Paul (French, 1839–1906)**

A painter of arguably unparalleled influence on the development of modern art, associated with the Post-Impressionist school and known for his technical experiments with colour and form and his interest in multiple-point perspective. In his maturity Cézanne had several preferred subjects, including his wife, still life, and Provençal landscapes.

**Dada**

A multidisciplinary movement that arose in Europe in response to the horrors of the First World War, whose adherents aimed to deconstruct and demolish traditional societal values and institutions. Artworks, often collages and readymades, typically scorned fine materials and craftsmanship. Chief Dadaists include Marcel Duchamp, Tristan Tzara, Kurt Schwitters, and Hans Arp.

**Daumier, Honoré (French, 1808–1879)**

A prominent artist in politically tumultuous nineteenth-century Paris, known primarily as a satirist. Daumier's published drawings and lithographs viciously mocked political figures and the bourgeoisie, for which he was jailed for six months in 1832–33. He also helped develop the genre of caricature sculpture.

**Denis, Maurice (French, 1870–1943)**

A painter, printmaker, designer, and influential theorist whose ideas contributed to the development of the anti-naturalist aesthetic of modernism. Denis was a founding member of the Nabis, an avant-garde artists' group active in Paris from 1888 to 1900, and is also well known for his later, overtly religious works.

**Doray, Audrey Capal (Canadian, b. 1931)**

A multimedia artist working in electronics, film, painting, and printmaking, Montreal-born Capal Doray arrived in Vancouver in the late 1950s. Through her involvement in the multidisciplinary art space New Design Gallery and her position as an instructor at the Vancouver School of Art, she became part of the transformation of the city's art scene in the postwar period. She is married to fellow artist Victor Doray.

**Duncan, Alma (Canadian, 1917–2004)**

A painter, graphic artist, and filmmaker, Duncan worked across figurative and abstract styles in a prolific career that spanned the twentieth century. While part of the graphics department of the National Film Board of Canada in the 1940s, she met her partner Audrey McLaren, with whom she would form the experimental film company Dunclaren Productions. During the Second World War she documented industrial production related to the war effort in Montreal.

**Erickson, Arthur (Canadian, 1924–2009)**

The first Canadian architect to win an American Institute of Architects Gold Medal (1986), Erickson completed numerous projects in Canada and internationally. His Vancouver office introduced modernist residential projects that brought new aesthetics to the city's architecture in the 1950s. He went on to design contributions to Expo 67 and Expo 70 as well as permanent structures such as Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall and the original campus for Simon Fraser University.

**Expressionism**

An intense, emotional style of art that values the representation of the artist's subjective inner feelings and ideas. German Expressionism started in the early twentieth century in Germany and Austria. In painting, Expressionism is associated with an intense, jarring use of colour and brush strokes that are not naturalistic.

**Fluxus**

A movement started in Germany in 1962 defined by an attitude of rebellion against artistic conservatism and professionalism rather than a particular style. Street art and festivals figured prominently in Fluxus activities, which were eventually centred in New York City and lasted until the early 1970s. Major influences were the composer John Cage and the artist Marcel Duchamp.

**formalism**

The study of art by analyzing a work's form and style to determine its meaning and quality. It emphasizes colour, texture, composition, and line over narrative, concept, or social and political context. In the 1960s the American critic Clement Greenberg strongly championed formalism. By the end of the 1960s postmodernism and conceptual art began to challenge formalism as a system of critique.

**Francis, Sam (American, 1923–1994)**

A painter and printmaker known for his expressive use of light and colour. Francis was influenced by the Quebec artist Jean-Paul Riopelle, whom he met while in Paris in the 1950s. Although associated with both Art Informel and Post-Painterly Abstraction, Francis was reluctant to be aligned with any movement.



**Fry, Roger (British, 1866–1934)**

The art critic who coined the term “Post-Impressionism” to describe the work of the Parisian avant-garde painters of the early twentieth century, Fry was a British painter, writer, and member of the influential Bloomsbury group. Beginning his career specializing in the Old Masters, in 1906 he was appointed to the position of curator of European paintings at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City. After his return to England in 1910, his work on developing the formalist theory of art criticism, as well as promoting Post-Impressionism, had a major influence on the artistic tastes of the Anglophone world.

**Gauguin, Paul (French, 1848–1903)**

A member—with Vincent van Gogh, Georges Seurat, and Paul Cézanne—of the group of painters now considered the Post-Impressionists, Gauguin is known for his use of colour and symbolism and for his daring compositions. The paintings he made in Tahiti, representing an idealized “primitive” culture, are among his most famous.

**gestural painting**

A process of painting based on intuitive movement and direct transmission of the artist’s state of mind through the brush stroke. In gestural painting, the paint can also be applied freely through a number of different acts, including pouring, dripping, and splattering. Gestural painting is associated with the Abstract Expressionists and action painting.

**Greenberg, Clement (American, 1909–1994)**

A highly influential art critic and essayist known primarily for his formalist approach and his contentious concept of modernism, which he first outlined in his 1961 article “Modernist Painting.” Greenberg was, notably, an early champion of Abstract Expressionists, including Jackson Pollock and the sculptor David Smith.

**Group of Seven**

A progressive and nationalistic school of landscape painting in Canada, active between 1920 (the year of the group’s first exhibition, at the Art Gallery of Toronto, now the Art Gallery of Ontario) and 1933. Founding members were the artists Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald, and Frederick Varley.

**Harris, Lawren (Canadian, 1885–1970)**

A founding member of the Group of Seven in Toronto in 1920, Harris was widely considered its unofficial leader. Unlike other members of the group, Harris moved away from painting representational landscapes, first to abstracted landscapes and then to pure abstraction. The Group of Seven broke up in 1933, and when the Canadian Group of Painters was formed in 1933, Harris was elected its first president.

**Harris, Lawren P. (Canadian, 1910–1994)**

The eldest son of Lawren S. Harris of the Group of Seven painter, Lawren P. Harris was best known as a landscape and, later, abstract painter. As an official war artist during the Second World War he documented the Italian front. From 1946 to 1975 he was the director of the School of Fine and Applied Arts at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, where he worked to popularize modern art in the Maritimes.

**Hepworth, Barbara (British, 1903–1975)**

Hepworth was a modernist sculptor and early English abstractionist. Like Henry Moore, a close friend since their student days at the Royal College of Art in London, she engaged in direct carving, where the sculptor works from the form suggested by the materials rather than a pre-established model. Her mature work is characterized by pierced and perforated forms that bring attention to the voids contained within the work.

**Hubbard, R.H. (Canadian, 1916–1989)**

Robert Hamilton (R.H.) Hubbard was an art historian and the first curator of Canadian art at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, where he was hired in 1947. He served as the gallery's chief curator from 1954 to 1978. A specialist in French-Canadian sculpture, Hubbard wrote extensively on the development of Canadian art.

**Humphrey, Jack (Canadian, 1901–1967)**

Known for his modernist cityscapes and harbour scenes, Humphrey was a painter, draughtsman, and watercolourist based in Saint John, New Brunswick. He was a member of various groups dedicated to promoting modern art in Canada, including the Canadian Group of Painters. Along with Miller Brittain, he was one of two non-Québécois artists who belonged to Montreal's Contemporary Art Society in the 1940s.

**Impressionism**

A highly influential art movement that originated in France in the 1860s and is associated with the emergence of modern urban European society. Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and other Impressionists rejected the subjects and formal rigours of academic art in favour of scenes of nature and daily life and the careful rendering of atmospheric effects. They often painted outdoors.

**Jackson, A.Y. (Canadian, 1882–1974)**

A founding member of the Group of Seven and an important voice in the formation of a distinctively Canadian artistic tradition. A Montreal native, Jackson studied painting in Paris before moving to Toronto in 1913; his northern landscapes are characterized by the bold brush strokes and vivid colours of his Impressionist and Post-Impressionist influences.



**Jarvis, Alan (Canadian, 1915–1972)**

The director of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, from 1955 to 1959, Jarvis was also a sculptor, writer, and editor. A charismatic figure, he was the host of the 1957 CBC television series *The Things We See* and used his position at the National Gallery to bring ideas about art to a wider audience. He oversaw the completion and opening of the Canadian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale from 1957 to 1958.

**Jarvis, Donald (Canadian, 1923–2001)**

An abstract painter, Jarvis was part of a cohort of West Coast artists who studied under B.C. Binning and Jack Shadbolt at the Vancouver School of Art in the 1940s. Time spent as a student of Hans Hofmann in the late 1940s influenced his abstract expressionist style. Jarvis was a professor at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design from 1950 to 1986 and later taught at the University of Victoria.

**Johnston, Frances-Anne (Canadian, 1910–1987)**

Educated at the Ontario College of Art in the 1920s, Johnston painted primarily interior scenes including a large number of still lifes and florals. Her husband was the painter, illustrator, and commercial artist Franklin Arbuckle.

**Klimt, Gustav (Austrian, 1862–1918)**

A Viennese painter best known for the decorative patterns that surround his figures and for his use of gold leaf in Byzantine-influenced paintings like *Adele Bloch-Bauer I*, 1907, and *The Kiss*, 1907–8. Klimt was the first president of the Vienna Secession, a splinter group of artists who broke from Vienna's conservative *Künstlerhaus Genossenschaft* (Artists House Union), rejecting the academic historical style in favour of an avant-garde approach.

**Lismer, Arthur (British/Canadian, 1885–1969)**

A landscape painter and founding member of the Group of Seven, Lismer immigrated to Canada from England in 1911. He was also an influential educator of adults and children, and he created children's art schools at both the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto (1933) and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (1946).

**lithograph**

A type of print invented in 1798 in Germany by Aloys Senefelder. Like other planographic methods of image reproduction, lithography relies on the fact that grease and water do not mix. Placed in a press, the moistened and inked lithographic stone will print only those areas previously designed with greasy lithographic ink.

**Loring, Frances (Canadian, 1887–1968)**

A prominent figure in establishing Canadian sculpture and the style of national public monuments. Loring and fellow sculptor Florence Wyle, her lifelong partner, were the first women in Canada widely recognized for sculpture. Loring designed and modelled the Queen Elizabeth Way Monument in Toronto and the statue of Robert Borden in Ottawa. A passionate arts advocate, she helped found the Sculptors Society of Canada and organize what would become the Canada Council for the Arts.

**MacDonald, J.E.H. (British/Canadian, 1873–1932)**

A painter, printmaker, calligrapher, teacher, poet, and designer, and a founding member of the Group of Seven. His sensitive treatment of the Canadian landscape was influenced by Walt Whitman's poetry and Henry David Thoreau's views on nature.

**Macdonald, Jock (British/Canadian, 1897–1960)**

A painter, printmaker, illustrator, teacher, and a pioneer in the development of abstract art in Canada. Macdonald began as a landscape painter but became interested in abstraction in the 1940s, influenced by Hans Hofmann and Jean Dubuffet. Macdonald was one of the founders of Painters Eleven in 1953. (See *Jock Macdonald: Life & Work* by Joyce Zemans.)

**MacDonald, Thomas Reid (Canadian, 1908–1978)**

An oil painter, MacDonald became an official war artist in 1944, while stationed in Italy as part of the Canadian forces. After the war he served briefly as the director of School of Fine and Applied Arts at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, before becoming the director of the Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario, in 1947. He held the latter post until 1973.

**Maclure, Samuel (Canadian, 1960–1929)**

Active from 1889 to 1928, Maclure was a self-taught architect whose Victoria and Vancouver offices shaped a defining style of British Columbia architecture through over 450 commissions. His distinctive Tudor Revival-style homes, an interpretation of New England shingle style, used local materials, their windows and porches framing views of the Pacific coast environment. He was also known for his watercolours of his architectural projects and of the Vancouver Island landscape, as well as for his Arts and Crafts-style garden designs.

**Manet, Édouard (French, 1832–1883)**

Considered a forerunner of the modernist movement in painting, Manet eschewed traditional subject matter for depictions of contemporary urban life that incorporated references to classic works. Although his work was critically dismissed, his unconventional painting style influenced the Impressionists.

**Matisse, Henri (French, 1869–1954)**

A painter, sculptor, printmaker, draftsman, and designer, aligned at different times with the Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, and Fauvists. By the 1920s he was, with Pablo Picasso, one of the most famous painters of his generation, known for his remarkable use of colour and line.



**McCurry, H.O. (Canadian, 1889–1964)**

An avid collector and advocate for the arts and art education in Canada, H.O. McCurry was patron to artist Tom Thomson and close with members of the Group of Seven. He was the assistant director of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, from 1919 to 1939, and succeeded Eric Brown as director from 1939 to 1955.

**Miller, Kenneth Hayes (American, 1876–1952)**

American painter of the urban genre and influential instructor who taught at the Art Students League in New York for forty years, beginning in 1911. Miller was inspired by Old Master techniques such as underpainting and glazing in his scenes of city life, such as, Union Square in New York City, salesgirls, members of high society, and department-store shoppers.

**Milne, David (Canadian, 1881–1953)**

A painter, printmaker, and illustrator whose work—principally landscapes—displays the tonal brilliance and concern with process of his Impressionist and Post-Impressionist influences. Milne lived in New York early in his career, where he trained at the Art Students League and participated in the Armory Show in 1913.

**modernism**

A movement extending from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century in all the arts, modernism rejected academic traditions in favour of innovative styles developed in response to contemporary industrialized society. Modernist movements in the visual arts have included Gustave Courbet's Realism, and later Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, and Cubism and on to abstraction. By the 1960s, anti-authoritarian postmodernist styles such as Pop art, Conceptual art, and Neo-Expressionism blurred the distinction between high art and mass culture.

**Monet, Claude (French, 1840–1926)**

A founder of the Impressionist movement in France. Monet's landscapes and seascapes are among the canonical works of Western art. Introduced to *plein air* painting as a teenager, Monet returned to it throughout his life as a means of exploring the atmospheric effects and perceptual phenomena that so interested him as an artist.

**Moore, Henry (British, 1898–1986)**

One of the twentieth century's most important sculptors. From its beginning, Moore's work was influenced by non-European sculpture; later he also drew from natural sources, such as bones and pebbles. His technique most often involved carving directly into his material, whether wood, stone, or plaster.

**Mortimer-Lamb, Harold (British/Canadian, 1872–1970)**

Although Lamb's career was in the mining industry, he was also an art critic. In appreciative articles in *The Canadian Magazine* and Britain's *The Studio*, to introduce the Group of Seven. As a photographer and collector of paintings, ceramics, and photography, he co-founded the Vanderpant Galleries in Vancouver and played a leading role in the Vancouver art scene. He helped found the Vancouver Art Gallery. (See Robert Amos's 2013 book *Harold Mortimer-Lamb: The Art Lover*.)

**Munch, Edvard (Norwegian, 1863–1944)**

Prefiguring the Expressionist movement, Munch's work prominently represented the artist's own emotions—fear, loneliness, sexual longing, and dread. A revered and prolific painter, printmaker, and draftsman, Munch is best known for his painting *The Scream*.

**Nash, Paul (British, 1889–1946)**

Nash was a landscape painter whose semi-abstract scenes drew on the work of Italian artist Giorgio de Chirico and the Surrealists. He founded the British art group Unit One in 1933 to promote modernist art, architecture, and design in England and was one of the organizers of the International Surrealist Exhibition in London, U.K., in 1936. Nash was an official British war artist in both world wars.

**New York School**

The group of avant-garde painters based in New York City in the 1940s and 1950s whose activities led that city to replace Paris as the capital of the modern art world. Chiefly Abstract Expressionists, the principal artists of the New York School include Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, and Mark Rothko.

**Nichols, Jack (Canadian, 1921–2009)**

An official war artist with the Canadian Navy during the Second World War, Nichols depicted the D-Day invasion as part of the Canadian contingent that landed near Brest, France. After the war, he received a Guggenheim Fellowship and later taught at the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto. Nichols was known for his melancholy drawings and lithographs and was one of several artists to represent Canada at the 1958 Venice Biennale.

**Nicol, Pegi (Canadian, 1904–1949)**

A member of the Canadian Group of Painters, Nicol was a modernist painter whose work depicted energetic, vibrant scenes from the environments around her. She was known as Pegi Nicol MacLeod after 1937.

**Ogilvie, Will (South African/Canadian, 1901–1989)**

A commercial artist, educator, and painter, Ogilvie was the first official Canadian war artist, noted for creating images of war while himself under fire. He was a member of the Canadian Group of Painters and the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour.



**Picasso, Pablo (Spanish, 1881–1973)**

One of the most famous and influential artists of his time, Picasso was a prominent member of the Parisian avant-garde circle that included Henri Matisse and Georges Braque. His painting *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*, 1906–7, is considered by many to be the most important of the twentieth century.

**Plaskett, Joseph (Canadian, 1918–2014)**

Known for his representations of everyday life in his paintings, Plaskett was born in British Columbia but spent most of his professional career living and working in Paris. Late in life he moved to the United Kingdom. In 2005 he formed the Plaskett Foundation, which currently awards \$30,000 to a Canadian painter enrolled in or recently graduated from a master of fine arts program to fund a year in Europe.

**Pop art**

A movement of the late 1950s to early 1970s in Britain and the United States, which adopted imagery from commercial design, television, and cinema. Pop art's most recognized proponents are Richard Hamilton, David Hockney, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein.

**Post-Impressionism**

A term coined by the British art critic Roger Fry in 1910 to describe painting produced originally in France between about 1880 and 1905 in response to Impressionism's artistic advances and limitations. Central figures include Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, and Vincent van Gogh.

**Pratt, Christopher (Canadian, b. 1935)**

A renowned Newfoundland painter and printmaker whose work is characterized by precision, flatness, intense focus on a single subject, and an almost artificial sense of light. His pictures of ordinary local scenes and figures have an otherworldly quality. He designed the provincial flag of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1980.

**Pratt, Mary (Canadian, 1935–2018)**

One of Canada's most prominent artists, whose use of light in particular transforms quotidian objects and moments into deeply meaningful subjects. Pratt's style developed in response to the demands on her time as the mother of four children; unable to paint scenes that struck her in the moment, she began recording them with a camera for later use.

**Read, Herbert (British, 1893–1968)**

A poet and critic, Read was a proponent of modernism in England in the early twentieth century. His theory of aesthetics was tied to a philosophical understanding of anarchy as essential to a healthy society. After the Second World War, his writings on the place of art in society influenced the development of art education in England. Read is closely associated with the sculptors Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and Ben Nicholson.

**realism**

A style of art in which subjects are depicted as factually as possible. Realism also refers to a nineteenth-century art movement, led by Gustave Courbet, concerned with the representation of daily modern life, rather than mythological, religious, or historical subjects.

**Renoir, Pierre-Auguste (French, 1841–1919)**

One of the foremost figures of the Impressionist movement. Renoir's prints, paintings, and sculptures often depict scenes of leisure and domestic ease. He left the Impressionists in 1878 to participate again in the Paris Salon, the city's officially sanctioned annual art exhibition.

**Rivera, Diego (Mexican, 1886–1957)**

A painter, draftsman, and celebrated muralist. Rivera was deeply committed to the idea of art's transformative power and to socialist ideals; his large-scale works typically exalt workers, revolutionaries, and indigenous and folk culture through a style and iconography that combines traditional and avant-garde techniques. He was famously married to Frida Kahlo from 1929 until her death in 1954.

**Roberts, Goodridge (Canadian, 1904–1974)**

A painter and influential teacher from New Brunswick, whose modernist sensibility developed in the late 1920s when he attended the Art Students League of New York. Roberts settled in Montreal in 1939 and within ten years was celebrated nationally for his careful but intense approach to figure painting, still life, and landscape.

**Roussel, Claude (Canadian, b. 1930)**

A pioneer of modern Acadian art, Roussel studied at the École des beaux-arts de Montréal in the 1950s before returning to his native New Brunswick. In addition to being an artist who worked in painting, sculpture, and relief, Roussel was the founder and first director of the Visual Arts Department at the Université de Moncton. He promoted the work of Acadian artists through various university and institutional positions, including at the Beaverbrook Gallery in Fredericton.

**Savoie, Roméo (Canadian, b. 1928)**

Acadian mixed-media artist and painter Savoie is part of the first generation of contemporary Acadian artists. A former architect, he worked in offices in Montreal and New Brunswick from 1956 through the 1960s before turning to art. Throughout his career he has worked to develop arts infrastructure to support other Acadian artists in New Brunswick.

**Shadbolt, Doris (Canadian, 1918–2003)**

A writer and curator, Shadbolt worked in various capacities at the Vancouver Art Gallery from 1950 to 1975. She organized important exhibitions, including *Arts of the Raven, Emily Carr: A Centennial Exhibition* and *The Art of Bill Reid*, and published books on both Reid and Carr. With her husband, Jack Shadbolt, she founded the VIVA Foundation for the Visual Arts in 1987.



**Shadbolt, Douglas (Canadian 1925–2002)**

British Columbia architect Douglas Shadbolt was best known as an educator who established architecture programs at the Nova Scotia Technical School (now DalTech), Halifax, and Carleton University, Ottawa. He returned to his home province in 1979 to serve as director of the School of Architecture at the University of British Columbia, a position he held until 1990. Shadbolt was the brother of painter Jack Shadbolt, whose British Columbia house he designed.

**Shadbolt, Jack (Canadian, 1909–1998)**

Primarily known as a painter and draftsman, Shadbolt studied art in London, Paris, and New York before returning to British Columbia. He taught at the Vancouver School of Art from 1945 to 1966, becoming the head of the school's painting and drawing section. Major influences include Emily Carr and Aboriginal art of the Pacific Northwest.

**Smith, Gordon (Canadian, b. 1919)**

British-born Smith is a painter living and working in Vancouver. Time spent as a student at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Art Institute) influenced his early style, which progressed from Abstract Expressionism through hard-edged abstraction and back to gestural expressionist landscapes through his career. Smith taught at the University of British Columbia and was a prominent figure in Vancouver's postwar art scene.

**social-realist painting**

An art movement, left-wing in politics and figurative in style, that emerged in the United States in the 1930s. The artists' subject was the American scene, and their paintings illustrated working-class hardships during the Great Depression, showing street scenes and men and women at work. Notable members were Ben Shahn, William Gropper, and Jack Levine.

**Stieglitz, Alfred (American, 1864–1946)**

Educated in Germany, Stieglitz began his career as a photographer in the Pictorialist style. He was also a critic, the editor and publisher of the periodical *Camera Work*, and a gallerist whose influence shaped the development of photography as a fine art in the United States in the twentieth century. In 1917 his work turned toward an attempt to transparently capture the shifting, fast-paced reality of modernity. His serial portrait of his wife, the painter Georgia O'Keeffe, exemplifies this late style.

**Surrealism**

An early twentieth-century literary and artistic movement that began in Paris. Surrealism aimed to express the workings of the unconscious, free of convention and reason, and was characterized by fantastic images and incongruous juxtapositions. The movement spread globally, influencing film, theatre, and music.

**Sutherland, Graham (British, 1903–1980)**

A painter, printmaker, and designer interested primarily in landscapes and natural motifs, which he represented in a non-traditional, almost Surrealist style. His Crucifixion and Thorn Head images gained wide currency as expressions of the human condition in the aftermath of the Second World War.

**Tanabe, Takao (Canadian, b. 1926)**

Tanabe is a prominent British Columbia painter. Interned along with his family and the majority of Japanese Canadians under government policy during the Second World War, he went on to study art in Canada, the United States, England, and Japan. Tanabe's early work was influenced by Japanese aesthetics and by the hard-edged style he was exposed to in New York City in the 1950s and 1960s. After he returned to Vancouver in 1980, he turned from abstraction to landscape painting.

**Thom, Ron (Canadian, 1923–1986)**

Ronald James Thom trained as a painter at the Vancouver School of Art before apprenticing to the Vancouver architecture firm Sharp and Thompson (later Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partners). After designing Toronto's Massey College in 1963, he moved to Toronto and set up his eponymous practice. Over the course of his career, Thom designed the Trent University campus in Peterborough, Ontario (1969), and the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo (1974), as well as over one hundred houses in the Vancouver area.

**Tinning, George Campbell (Canadian, 1910–1996)**

Born in Saskatoon, Campbell Tinning moved to Montreal in 1939 to work as an artist, illustrator, and graphic designer. An official Canadian war artist during the Second World War, he later turned toward abstraction.

**Turner, J.M.W. (British, 1775–1851)**

Widely considered the foremost British landscape painter of the nineteenth century, Turner imbued his paintings with an expressive romanticism. His subject matter ranged from local landscapes to otherworldly natural events. He has been heralded as a precursor to both Impressionism and modernist abstract art.

**Vancouver School of Art**

Originally founded in 1925 by the British Columbia Art League as the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts, the school changed its name to the Vancouver School of Art in 1936. In 1980 it became the Emily Carr College of Art and, in 2008, obtained university status as the Emily Carr University of Art and Design.

**Vanderpant, John (Dutch/Canadian, 1884–1939)**



After immigrating to Canada in 1911, Vanderpant became a major influence on photography in Western Canada in the 1920s and 1930s. His Robson Street gallery in Vancouver, opened in 1926 with Harold Mortimer-Lamb, promoted contemporary Canadian and international art and was a centre for music, poetry, and painting. Originally working in the Pictorialist style, in the late 1920s he developed a personal expression that emphasized light and form, becoming increasingly abstract. His solo exhibitions toured the United States, Great Britain, and Europe, and he became a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain. (See Charles C. Hill, *John Vanderpant: Photographs* [1976].)

**van Gogh, Vincent (Dutch, 1853–1890)**

Among the most recognizable and beloved of modernist painters, van Gogh is the creator of *Starry Night* and *Vase with Sunflowers*, both from 1889. He is a nearly mythological figure in Western culture, the archetypal “tortured artist” who achieves posthumous fame after a lifetime of struggle and neglect.

**Varley, F.H. (Frederick Horsman) (British/Canadian, 1881–1969)**

A founding member of the Group of Seven, known for his contributions to Canadian portraiture as well as landscape painting. Originally from Sheffield, England, Varley moved to Toronto in 1912 at the encouragement of his friend Arthur Lismer. From 1926 to 1936 he taught at the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts, now known as Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

**Weatherbie, Vera (Canadian, 1909–1977)**

A member of the first graduating class of the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts in 1929, Weatherbie was a painter and an influential figure in the city’s art scene. Romantically involved with fellow painter Frederick Varley, she served as a model for some of his best-known portraits and taught at the British Columbia College of Art. In 1942 she married art critic Harold Mortimer-Lamb, father of painter Molly Lamb Bobak.

**Whistler, James McNeill (American/British, 1834–1903)**

Whistler, a painter and printmaker, was a leading promoter of “art for art’s sake”: the doctrine that an artist should create evocative visual experiences based principally on the subtle harmonization of colour, not on sentiment or moral lessons. Believing that painting and music had much in common, he used music references in the titles of many of his paintings, including *Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 1* (1871; better known as *Whistler’s Mother*). In 1877 the art critic John Ruskin accused him of “flinging a pot of paint in the public’s face” when Whistler exhibited *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket*. Whistler sued Ruskin, but was awarded damages of only one farthing.

**Wyle, Florence (American/Canadian, 1881–1968)**



# MOLLY LAMB BOBAK

Life & Work by Michelle Gewurtz

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Prominent sculptor and designer who, together with her partner Frances Loring, shaped the landscape of Canadian sculpture. Influenced by classical Greek sculpture, Wyle specialized in anatomy and depicted women in various poses, from undertaking manual labour to the erotic. Wyle was a co-founder of the Sculptors Society of Canada and the first woman sculptor awarded full membership to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.





# SOURCES & RESOURCES

After her much publicized appointment in 1945 as Canada's only female official war artist to be sent overseas, Molly Lamb Bobak devoted herself to her art and to teaching art. She drew or painted almost every day of her life, and her work has featured in more than fifty solo and 150 group exhibitions. In 1993 the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina organized a major touring retrospective of her work. Her art documenting women's experiences during the Second World War was included in notable travelling exhibitions such as *Canvas of War* (2000), which was dedicated to Canada's war artists. More recent exhibitions and publications have considered the full range of her work, in oil, watercolour, printmaking, and illustration.



## KEY EXHIBITIONS



Official war artists, 1945, photographer unknown. *From left to right:* Campbell Tinning, Orville Fisher, George Pepper, Charles Comfort, William Ogilvie, E.J. Hughes, Molly Lamb Bobak, Col. George Stanley, Bruno Bobak, Alex Colville, A.Y. Jackson, and Harry O. McCurry at the National Gallery of Canada.

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**1942** Vancouver Art Gallery. First solo show for the recently graduated artist before her enlistment in the Canadian Women's Army Corps.

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**1944** *Canadian Army Art Exhibition*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Wins second prize, which helps her campaign to be appointed Canada's first official woman war artist.

*Artes Gráficas do Canadá*, Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro. First international exhibition.

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**1945–46** *Exhibition of Canadian War Art*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

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**1946** *Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour*. Became a member that year.

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**1947** *Canadian Women Artists*, Riverside Museum, New York.

*Canadian Group of Painters*, Art Gallery of Toronto.

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**1950** New Design Gallery, Vancouver. First solo show in a commercial gallery.

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**1951** Bienal de São Paulo, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil.

*Festival of Britain*, London, U.K.

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**1953** *German Industries Fair*, Berlin.





*Molly and Bruno Bobak*, Holy Trinity Memorial Hall, New Westminster, B.C. First time she and her husband show together in a “two-man” exhibition.

*Molly and Bruno, Gordon Smith and Others*, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. First feature as part of so-called British Columbia School.

1954–55

*An Exhibition of Canadian Painting*, Pakistan, India, Ceylon, organized by the National Gallery of Canada.

1957

2nd Biennial Exhibition of Canadian Painting, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

1959

*Paintings and Sculptures of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon, Washington, British Columbia*, Portland Art Museum.

3rd Biennial Exhibition of Canadian Painting, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Bienal de São Paulo, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil.

*International Print Exhibition*, Lugano, Switzerland.

*Canadian Women Painters*, New York.

1960

Vancouver Art Gallery. Second solo exhibition at British Columbia’s premier public institution.

1961

Art Centre, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton. First solo show at UNB organized by Bruno Bobak.

4th Biennial Exhibition of Canadian Painting, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

1963

*Exhibition of Paintings by Molly Lamb and Bruno Bobak*, New Brunswick Museum, Saint John and Mount Allison University, Sackville.

*3 Years Work: Norway, England, Canada*, New Design Gallery, Vancouver.

1964

*Contemporary Canadian Drawings from the National Gallery of Canada* (touring exhibition).

1965

*Canadian Prints and Drawings Exhibition*, Commonwealth Arts Festival, Cardiff, Wales.

1966

*Artists of Atlantic Canada*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

*Molly Lamb B. and Bruno Bobak*, Art Centre, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton.

Solo exhibition at Dalhousie University Art Gallery, Halifax.



# MOLLY LAMB BOBAK

Life & Work by Michelle Gewurtz

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| <b>1967</b> | Expo 1967, Atlantic Provinces Pavilion, Montreal. |
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| <b>1968</b> | <i>Molly Lamb Bobak</i> , Commonwealth Institute Art Gallery, London, U.K. First international solo exhibition. |
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| <b>1970</b> | <i>Watercolours by Molly Lamb Bobak</i> , Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton. First solo exhibition to tour the Atlantic provinces. |
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| <b>1975</b> | <i>From Women's Eyes: Women Painters in Canada</i> , Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, ON. |
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| <b>1976</b> | <i>Through Canadian Eyes: Trends and Influences in Canadian Art, 1815-1965</i> , Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary. |
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| <b>1977</b> | <i>The Queen Comes to New Brunswick: Paintings and Drawings by Molly Lamb Bobak</i> , Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton (touring solo exhibition). |
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| <b>1978</b> | <i>A Terrible Beauty: The Art of Canada at War</i> , The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, ON (touring exhibition). |
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| <b>1983</b> | <i>Vancouver Art and Artists, 1931-1983</i> , Vancouver Art Gallery.<br><br><i>The Canadian Landscape: Paintings Selected from the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Firestone Art Collection</i> , Canada House Cultural Centre Gallery, London, U.K.<br><br><i>Printmaking in British Columbia, 1889-1983</i> , Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. Toured. |
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| <b>1984</b> | <i>Reflections of a Province: New Brunswick Bicentennial Exhibition</i> , Gallery 78, Fredericton. |
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| <b>1985</b> | <i>Aspects of Fredericton: Views of the Bicentennial City</i> , Gallery 78, Fredericton. |
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| <b>1993</b> | <i>Molly Lamb Bobak: A Retrospective</i> , MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina. Touring exhibition. |
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| <b>2000</b> | <i>Canvas of War: Masterpieces from the Canadian War Museum</i> . Travelling exhibition jointly produced by the Canadian War Museum and the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Ottawa-Gatineau. |
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| <b>2004</b> | <i>A Modern Life: Art and Design in British Columbia, 1945-1960</i> , Vancouver Art Gallery. |
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| <b>2015</b> | <i>The Artist Herself: Self-Portraits by Canadian Historical Women Artists</i> , Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston, ON. Nationally touring exhibition. |
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2018*Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town*, Burnaby Art Gallery, B.C.**WRITINGS & ILLUSTRATIONS BY MOLLY LAMB BOBAK**

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Molly Lamb sketching at Volendam, Netherlands, September 12, 1945, photographer unknown.

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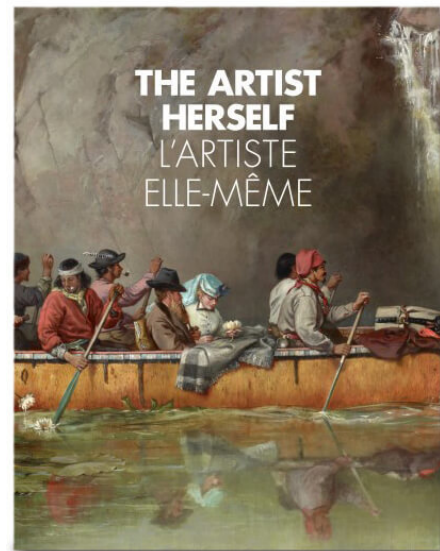
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Molly Lamb painting in London, England, July 12, 1945, photograph by Karen Margaret Hermiston, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

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Beginning in the mid-1950s in Vancouver, Molly Lamb Bobak appeared as an instructor delivering art lessons that were broadcast by local radio and television stations. She continued to do radio and television work in British Columbia and, in the mid-1960s, in New Brunswick. Recordings of these broadcasts may be found in the archives of CHSJ in Saint John, New Brunswick.

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Left to right: Murray Kinloch, Desmond Pacey, Bruno Bobak, and Molly Lamb Bobak at Lamb Bobak's solo exhibition at the University of New Brunswick Art Centre, Fredericton, 1961, photographer unknown.

### FURTHER READING

Molly Lamb Bobak was interviewed and written about extensively during her lifetime in several newspapers and magazines across Canada. The National Gallery of Canada has an artist file that contains four large folders filled with clippings. The Canadian War Museum similarly has a three-volume file containing correspondence among Lamb Bobak, H.O. McCurry, and A.Y. Jackson, along with other articles and documentation. The Bobaks donated their personal archive to Library and Archives Canada, which also has an extensive fonds and original artwork. Numerous other public institutions have documentation and archival material available for consultation. The Canadian Women's Artist History Initiative at Concordia University has bibliographic and biographical information accessible on their website. Below is a selection of writing about Molly Lamb Bobak that is available online and in various library and archives.





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LEFT: Installation view of *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town*, Burnaby Art Gallery, January 19-April 8, 2018, photograph by the Burnaby Art Gallery. RIGHT: Installation view of *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town*, Burnaby Art Gallery, January 19-April 8, 2018, photograph by the Burnaby Art Gallery.





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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### MICHELLE GEWURTZ

Michelle Gewurtz, curator at the Ottawa Art Gallery, is developing *A Woman of the Crowd*, an exhibition of works by Molly Lamb Bobak drawn in part from the Firestone Collection of Canadian Art. In her doctoral studies at the University of Leeds, Gewurtz focused on feminism and the visual arts, while her research interests in general explore the convergence of gender politics and creative identity in both historical and contemporary art practices. In 2012 she was a scholar-in-residence at the Hadassah Brandeis Institute in Waltham, Massachusetts, where she co-organized seminars and a symposium on Jewish Women and the Arts.

Gewurtz has taught courses in women's studies, art history, and critical curatorial practice at OCAD University, and York University, Toronto, and at the University of Waterloo. She also organized exhibition-related programming at A Space Gallery in Toronto, the University of Leeds, and the Freud Museum in London, England. Her curatorial projects include *Àdisòkàmagan: Nous connaître un peu nous-mêmes / We'll All Become Stories*, Ottawa Art Gallery, 2018; *Jerry Grey on the Grid: 1968-1978*, Ottawa Art Gallery, 2016; *A Window on Paraskeva Clark*, Ottawa Art Gallery, 2016; and *RAG: 25 Years / 25 Artists*, Richmond Art Gallery, 2005.



**"What struck me most as I was researching Molly Lamb Bobak's life and career was her sense of humour and her propensity toward abstraction. She was an artist who experimented in her art by constantly pushing herself to see everyday events from a new perspective. Her place as one of Canada's most celebrated painters is due more to her long and varied career than to her appointment as the only woman to receive an official commission as a Canadian war artist."**





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#### From the Author

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Finally, I owe a longstanding debt to my parents for their belief in me and what I do, and especially to my husband, Dr. Marcel Swiboda, whose deep commitment to humanistic education inspires me always.

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Molly Lamb, *Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps*, 1946. (See below for details.)

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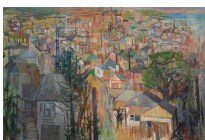
Biography: Vera Weatherbie, *Portrait of Molly*, 1938. (See below for details.)



Key Works: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Studio*, 1956. (See below for details.)



Significance & Critical Issues: Molly Lamb, *Gas Drill*, 1944. (See below for details.)



Style & Technique: Molly Lamb Bobak, *New Housing Project*, 1956. (See below for details.)

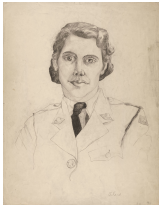


Sources & Resources: Molly Lamb Bobak, *The Legislative Ball*, 1986. (See below for details.)



Where to See: Installation view of *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town*, Burnaby Art Gallery, January 19–April 8, 2018, photograph by Blaine Campbell. (See below for details.)

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*A Bakeshop, Saint-Léonard*, 1951. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1951, (5797). Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada. © Molly Bobak.



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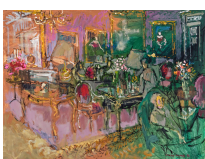
*Canteen, Nijmegen, Holland*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1561). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



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*Crocus and Thorn*, 1959. Private Collection. Photo credit: Toni Hafkenscheid.



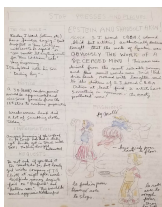
*CWACs on Leave in Amsterdam, September, 1945, 1946*. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1581). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*CWACs Sorting Mail*, n.d. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1595). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*The Fair*, n.d. Private Collection. Photo credit: Toni Hafkenscheid.



"Fashions by Mollé (Stop Press)," 1940, illustration from *The Daily Chore Girl–Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, (1992-450 DAP 150). © Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



*Florence*, n.d. The Leslie B. Marcus Collection, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton. Photo credit: Beaverbrook Art Gallery.



"For Ladies W110278 Presents 1943 Fall Fashions," 1943, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942-45. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa (R5336-21-3-E). © Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.





*Gas Drill*, 1944. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1603). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



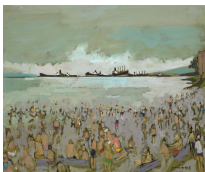
"Gas Drill Vermilion," December 1942, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942-45. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak (1990-255 DAP 00013). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



"Geraniums," 1977, illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978). Photo credit: Rachel Topham.



*German Children in Bremen, Germany*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1604). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*Grain Boats at English Bay, Vancouver Harbour*, n.d. Private collection. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art Auction House.



*The Great Kite Festival No. 2*, n.d. Private Collection. Photo credit: Toni Hafkenscheid.



Illustration (detail) in Anny Scoones, *A Tale of Merlin the Billy Dog* (Apple Press Farm, 2000), illustrations by Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Erin Szikora. Courtesy of the Art Gallery of Ontario Library and Archives.



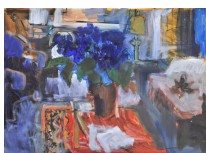
Illustration in Frances Itani, *Linger by the Sea* (Brunswick Press, 1979), watercolour illustrations by Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Toronto Public Library.



Illustration for “Frog Burping” in Sheree Fitch, *Merry-Go Day* (Doubleday Canada, 1991), illustrations by Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Toronto Public Library.



Illustration for “The Moon’s a Banana” in Sheree Fitch, *Toes in My Nose and Other Poems* (Doubleday Canada, 1987), illustrations by Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Toronto Public Library.



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*John, Dick, and the Queen*, 1977. New Brunswick Art Bank. Photo credit: New Brunswick Art Bank.



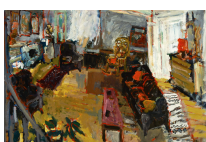
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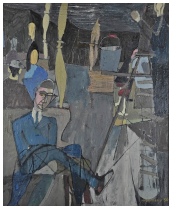
"Molly Lamb Enters the Army," November 22, 1942, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak, (1990-255 DAP 000703). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



*Montague Beach, Galiano Island*, c.1990. Private collection. Courtesy of Winchester Galleries.



*New Housing Project*, 1956. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1957, (6664). © Molly Bobak. Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.



*North Vancouver Ferry*, 1950. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. Photo credit: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



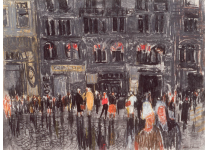
*November 11, 1971*. Firestone Collection of Canadian Art, Ottawa Art Gallery, donated to the City of Ottawa by the Ontario Heritage Foundation. Photo credit: David Barbour.



*On the Beach*, 1983. Private collection, Calgary. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art Auction House.



*Oslo*, 1960. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1961 (9576). © Molly Bobak. Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.



*Oslo Street*, 1961. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. Photo credit: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



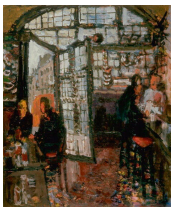
*Portrait of Joan Lowndes*, 1952. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, gift of Joan Lowndes, (VAG 84.43). Photo credit: Vancouver Art Gallery.



"Private Lamb Has a Quiet Afternoon in the Canteen," December 1, 1942, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M., 1942-45*. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak, (1990-255 DAP 00006). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



*Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps*, 1946. Beaverbrook Collection of War Art, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1626). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*Pub, Sloane Square*, 1970. Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa, (ABBA #72/3-1557). Photo credit: Canada Council Art Bank.



*Red Poppies*, 1977, illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press: 1977). Photo credit: Rachel Topham.





"Renoir Lamb at Work on Galiano Wharf (Coloured Supplement)," 1940, illustration from *The Daily Chore Girl* –*Galiano's Dish Rag*, 1940. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak (1992-450 DAP 150). © Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



*Rink Theme-Skaters*, 1969. Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa, (ABBA #73/4-0039). Photo credit: Brandon Clarida.



*Ruins, Holborn Street, London*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1627). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*Ruins of Emmerich, Germany*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1629). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*Ruins of Emmerich, Germany, Oct. 1945*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1628). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*The Saint Ives Train*, 1958. The McCuaig Collection, Art Gallery of Sudbury, (94-004). Photo credit: Art Gallery of Sudbury.



*The School Yard*, 1962. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1964, (14516). © Molly Bobak. Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.



*Shediac Beach (N.B.)*, 1972. Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa, (ABBA #72/3-1816). Photo credit: Lawrence Cook.



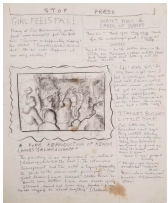
*Signing Up for the Pacific*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1633). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*Still Life*, 1951. Collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, The University of British Columbia, gift of the Estate of Sheila and Wilfred Watson. Photo credit: Michael R. Barrick.



*Still Life Revisited*, 1955. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, transfer from Vancouver Art Gallery Women's Auxiliary Picture Loan Committee, (VAG 70.38). Photo credit: Vancouver Art Gallery.



"Stop Press (Coloured Supplement)," 1940, illustration from *The Daily Chore Girl*—Galiano's Dish Rag, 1940. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak, (1992-450 DAP 150). © Molly Lamb Bobak. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



*The Studio*, 1956. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. Photo credit: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

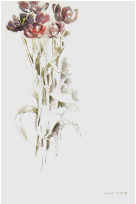


*Tea Hill*, 1981 (appeared on stamp, 1982). Collection of the Canada Post Corporation. Photo credit: Canada Post Corporation.





"A typical day in the life of a CWAC (Part I)," November 8, 1943, illustration from *W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942-45. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak, (1990-255 DAP 00080). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



"Tulips," 1977, illustration from *Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist* (Pagurian Press, 1978). Photo credit: Rachel Topham.



*Untitled (Christmas Card)*, c.1995. The Laura Brandon Collection of Canadian Women's Art, Ottawa Art Gallery. Photo credit: Justin Wonnacott.



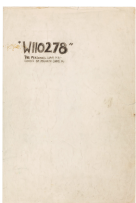
*Untitled (Vancouver)*, 1941. Private collection. Photo credit: Steve MacGillivray.



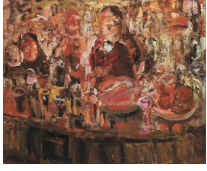
*Victory Japan Celebrations*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1650). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.



*View from the Bridge*, n.d. Private collection. Courtesy of Gallery 78.



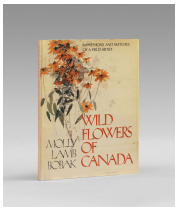
*W110278: The Personal War Records of Private Lamb, M.*, 1942-45. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, gift of Molly Lamb Bobak, (1990-255 DAP). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo credit: Library and Archives Canada.



*Warm Pub*, n.d. Private collection. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art Auction House.



*White Tulips*, 1956. McGill Visual Arts Collection, McGill University Library, Montreal (1973-284). Courtesy of McGill Visual Arts Collection.



*Wild Flowers of Canada: Impressions and Sketches of a Field Artist*, 1978. Published by Pagurian Press. Photo credit: Rachel Topham.



*Wilhelmshaven at Night*, 1945. Collection of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, (19710261-1654). Photo credit: Canadian War Museum.

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Bruno Bobak, *Campus Gates*, 1964 (appeared on stamp, 1982), Collection of the University of New Brunswick. Photo credit: Canada Post Corporation.



Bruno Bobak, *Primroses*, 1960. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1961 (9725). Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.



Cover of *The Artist Herself: Self-Portraits by Canadian Historical Women / L'artiste elle-même : autoportraits de femmes artistes au Canada* (Kingston: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, and Art Gallery of Hamilton, 2015). Photo credit: Stephanie Burdzy.





David Milne, *Storm Over the Islands No. 3*, 1951. Collection of the Art Gallery of Windsor, bequest of Frances Duncan Barwick, (19851985.064.003). Photo credit: Art Gallery of Windsor.



Édouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1882. Collection of the Courtauld Institute, London. © The Samuel Courtauld Trust. Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.



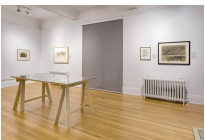
Emily Carr in her studio, 1939, photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, gift of Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft.



Harold Mortimer-Lamb, *Self-Portrait*, n.d. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. Photo credit: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



Honoré Daumier, *Une Terrible Rencontre*, 1845. Collection of the Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., (1979.49.118). Photo credit: National Gallery of Art.



Installation view of *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town*. Curated by Hilary Letwin, Burnaby Art Gallery, January 19–April 8, 2018. Selection of work from the City of Burnaby Permanent Art Collection and on loan from the Canadian War Museum, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Vancouver Art Gallery and the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia. Photo credit: Blaine Campbell.



Installation view of *Molly Lamb Bobak: Talk of the Town*. Curated by Hilary Letwin, Burnaby Art Gallery, January 19–April 8, 2018. Selection of work from the City of Burnaby Permanent Art Collection and on loan from the Canadian War Museum, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Vancouver Art Gallery and the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia. Photo credit: Blaine Campbell.



Jack Shadbolt, *Granville Street at Night*, 1946. Private collection. Waddington's Auctioneers & Appraisers. © Courtesy of Simon Fraser Galleries, Burnaby, B.C.



Jack Shadbolt, *Seaport Abstraction*, 1933. Collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia. Photo credit: Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery. © Courtesy of Simon Fraser University Galleries, Burnaby, BC.



J.M.W. Turner, *Snow Storm—Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth*, 1842. Collection of the Tate Gallery, London, accepted by the nation as part of the Turner Bequest, 1856 (N00530). Photo credit: Tate Gallery.



John Vanderpant, *Urge*, 1937. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 2006, (41961). Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.



McWhirters' Easter Specials, "Featuring Attractive Bargains for Everybody," 1940s clothing advertisement. Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.



Molly in her studio, n.d. Photographer unknown. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, (1993-168 NPC). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.



Molly Lamb as a child at Burnaby Lake, British Columbia, 1923. Photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb. Image (I-66770) courtesy of the Royal BC Museum and Archives, Victoria.





Molly Lamb Bobak and Bruno Bobak, 1946. Photograph by George Rutherford. Courtesy of TouchWood Editions.



Molly Lamb Bobak and Bruno Bobak in their Peters Road house, designed by Doug Shadbolt, n.d. Photographer unknown. Photo credit: Erin Szikora.



Molly Lamb Bobak, November 1978. Photograph by Erik Christensen. Courtesy of the *Globe and Mail*.



Molly Lamb Bobak painting in London, England, July 12, 1945. Photograph by Karen Margaret Hermiston. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, (1967-052 NPC). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.



Molly Lamb Bobak sketching at Volendam, Netherlands, September 12, 1945. Photographer unknown. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, (1967-052 NPC). © Library and Archives Canada. Photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.



The Mortimer-Lamb family home, West 54th Avenue, Vancouver. Photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb. Image (H-05315) courtesy of the Royal BC Museum and Archives, Victoria.



Murray Kinloch, Desmond Pacey, Bruno Bobak, and Molly Lamb Bobak at Lamb Bobak's solo exhibition at the University of New Brunswick Art Centre, 1961. Photographer unknown. Photo credit: Erin Szikora.



Official war artists, 1945, at the National Gallery of Canada. Photographer unknown. Photo credit: Erin Szikora.



Paul Cézanne, *The Basket of Apples*, 1893. Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection, Art Institute of Chicago, (1926.252). Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.



Paul Cézanne, *Gardanne*, 1885–86. Collection of the Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, (BF917). Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.



Paul Cézanne, *Geraniums*, 1888–90. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., (1995.47.25). Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.



Paul Cézanne, *Still Life Flowers in a Vase*, 1888. Private collection. Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.



Pegi Nicol MacLeod, *Christmas Tree and Skaters, Rockefeller Plaza*, 1946. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1950, (5024). Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.

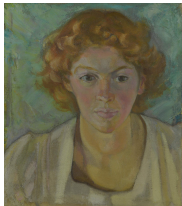


Queen Elizabeth and Premier Richard B. Hatfield, July 15, 1976. Photographer unknown. Collection of the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Fredericton. Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick.



Thomas Hart Benton, *Island Hay*, 1945. Private collection. Courtesy of The Owings Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Photo credit: Sotheby's Canada.





Vera Weatherbie, *Portrait of Molly*, 1938. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. Photo credit: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

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Life & Work by Michelle Gewurtz

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## Digital Image Specialist

Rachel Topham

## French Layout Associate

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Art Canada Institute

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