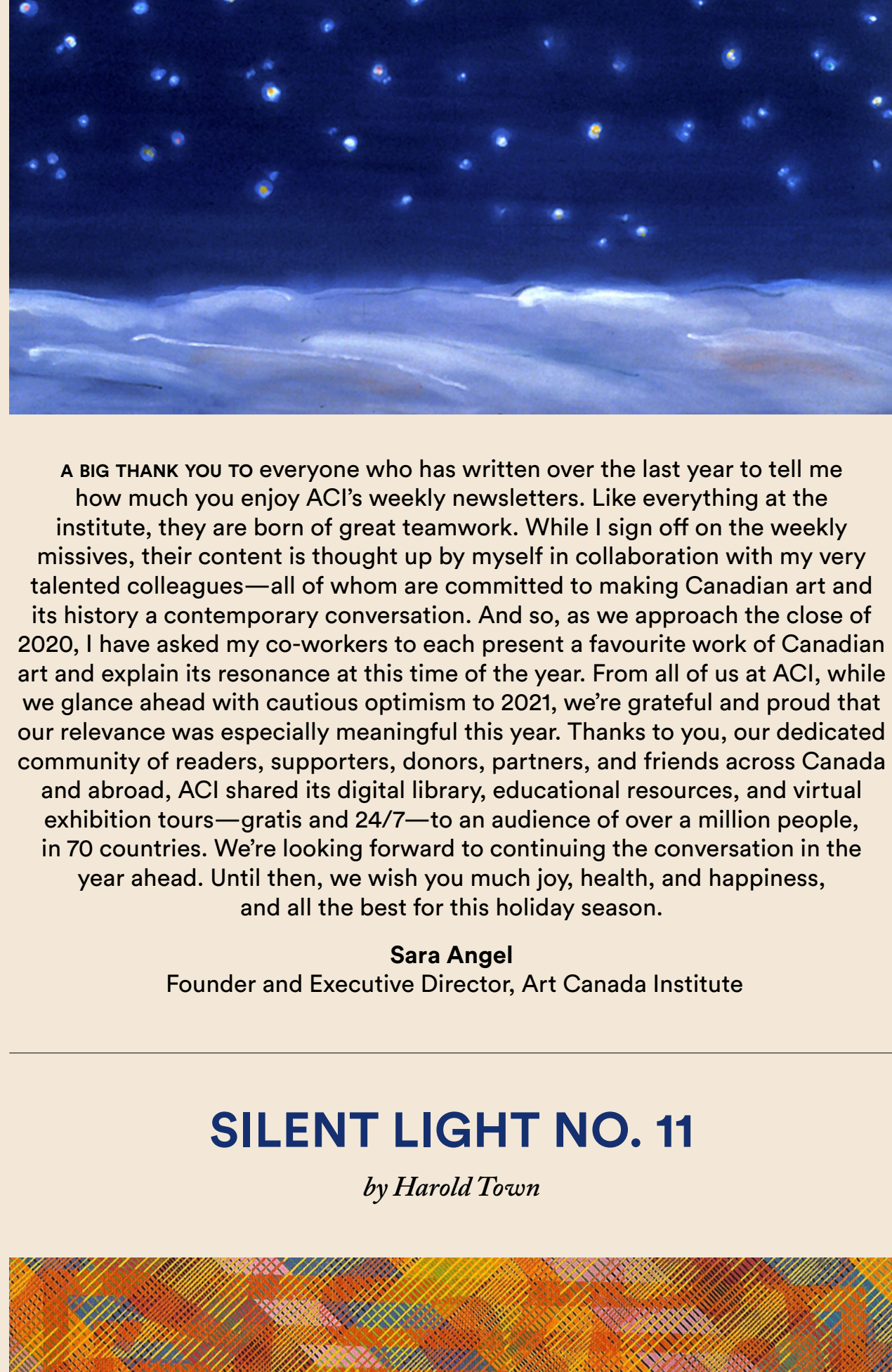


EIGHT GREAT HOLIDAY WORKS  
SOME FAVOURITES, FROM US TO YOU

*For our last newsletter of 2020, the ACI team presents some of our favourite winter scenes that celebrate the season*



A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who has written over the last year to tell me how much you enjoy ACI's weekly newsletters. Like everything at the institute, they are born of great teamwork. While I sign off on the weekly missives, their content is thought up by myself in collaboration with my very talented colleagues—all of whom are committed to making Canadian art and its history a contemporary conversation. And so, as we approach the close of 2020, I have asked my co-workers to each present a favourite work of Canadian art and explain its resonance at this time of the year. From all of us at ACI, while we glance ahead with cautious optimism to 2021, we're grateful and proud that our relevance was especially meaningful this year. Thanks to you, our dedicated community of readers, supporters, donors, partners, and friends across Canada and abroad, ACI shared its digital library, educational resources, and virtual exhibition tours—gratis and 24/7—to an audience of over a million people, in 70 countries. We're looking forward to continuing the conversation in the year ahead. Until then, we wish you much joy, health, and happiness, and all the best for this holiday season.

**Sara Angel**

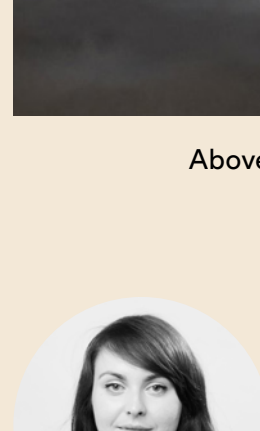
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

## SILENT LIGHT NO. 11

*by Harold Town*



Harold Town, *Silent Light No. 11*, 1968–69, Estate of Harold Town



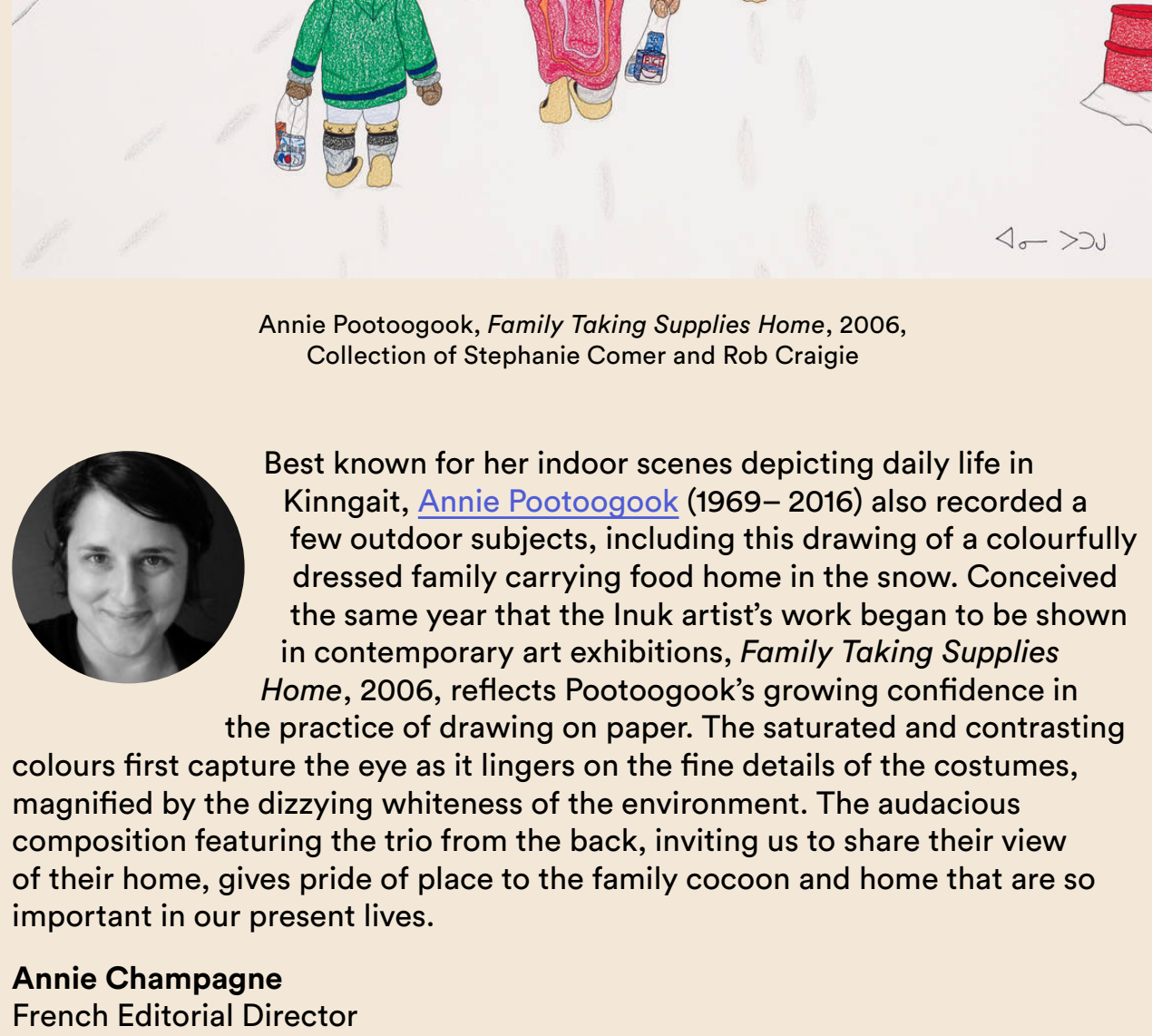
This work, a kind of self-portrait, reminds me of how [Harold Town](#) (1924–1990) lived life large and with a celebratory bravado—particularly during the holidays. A founding member of the Abstract Expressionist group Painters Eleven, he blazed a trail in Canadian art from the 1950s to the 1990s. Especially talented and equally handsome, Town was a bon vivant, dandy, rebel, and painter with such earning power that he was dubbed not only “Canada’s most famous artist” but one “with a tax problem” (as the *Toronto Star* reported). Just like his singular persona, Town’s Christmas trees were also big, famous, and known for their astonishing ornaments. Part Op-Art tour de force, part twentieth-century still life, *Silent Light No. 11*, 1968–69, conveys the memory of a floor covered with broken Christmas tree balls—perhaps after a bit too much fun was had. As art historian Gerta Moray notes, it allowed Town to present “infinities all over the canvas.” In doing so we see the magic of holiday light with dazzling panache.

**Sara Angel**

Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

## CABIN IN THE SNOW

*by Liz Magoz*



Above: Liz Magoz, *Cabin in the Snow*, 1989, National Gallery of Canada  
Below: Detail of *Cabin in the Snow*



Liz Magoz’s (b.1948) curiously tender sculptures and installations often depict winter and its material stuff—gloves, blankets, sleeping bags, hollow trees—objects that offer warmth, respite, and shelter. They can also convey a profound loneliness and longing for connection. For nearly a decade I have walked past the industrial complex at the intersection of Dupont and Ossington Street in Toronto where Magoz composed this work in 1989 (I live close by). On many a dark night I have stopped to peer into its windows, my face inches from the panes of glass as I look for signs of life, for hope. I often think of *Cabin in the Snow* and of the winter inside all of us. We all long to be welcomed into such a place, to be warmed by and bathed in light.

**Stephanie Burdzy**

Senior Operations Executive

## FAMILY TAKING SUPPLIES HOME

*by Annie Pootoogook*



Annie Pootoogook, *Family Taking Supplies Home*, 2006, Collection of Stephanie Corner and Rob Craigie



Best known for her indoor scenes depicting daily life in Kinngait, [Annie Pootoogook](#) (1969–2016) also recorded a few outdoor subjects, including this drawing of a colourfully dressed family carrying food home in the snow. Conceived the same year that the Inuk artist’s work began to be shown in contemporary art exhibitions, *Family Taking Supplies Home*, 2006, reflects Pootoogook’s growing confidence in the practice of drawing on paper. The saturated and contrasting colours first capture the eye as it lingers on the fine details of the costumes, magnified by the dizzying whiteness of the environment. The audacious composition featuring the trio from the back, inviting us to share their view of their home, gives pride of place to the family cocoon and home that are so important in our present lives.

**Annie Champagne**

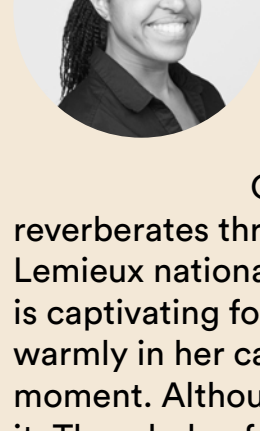
French Editorial Director

ARCTIC NIGHT WITH WHIPLASH,  
NORTHERN LIGHTS

*by K.M. Graham*



K.M. Graham, *Arctic Night with Whiplash, Northern Lights*, 1987, Art Gallery of Hamilton



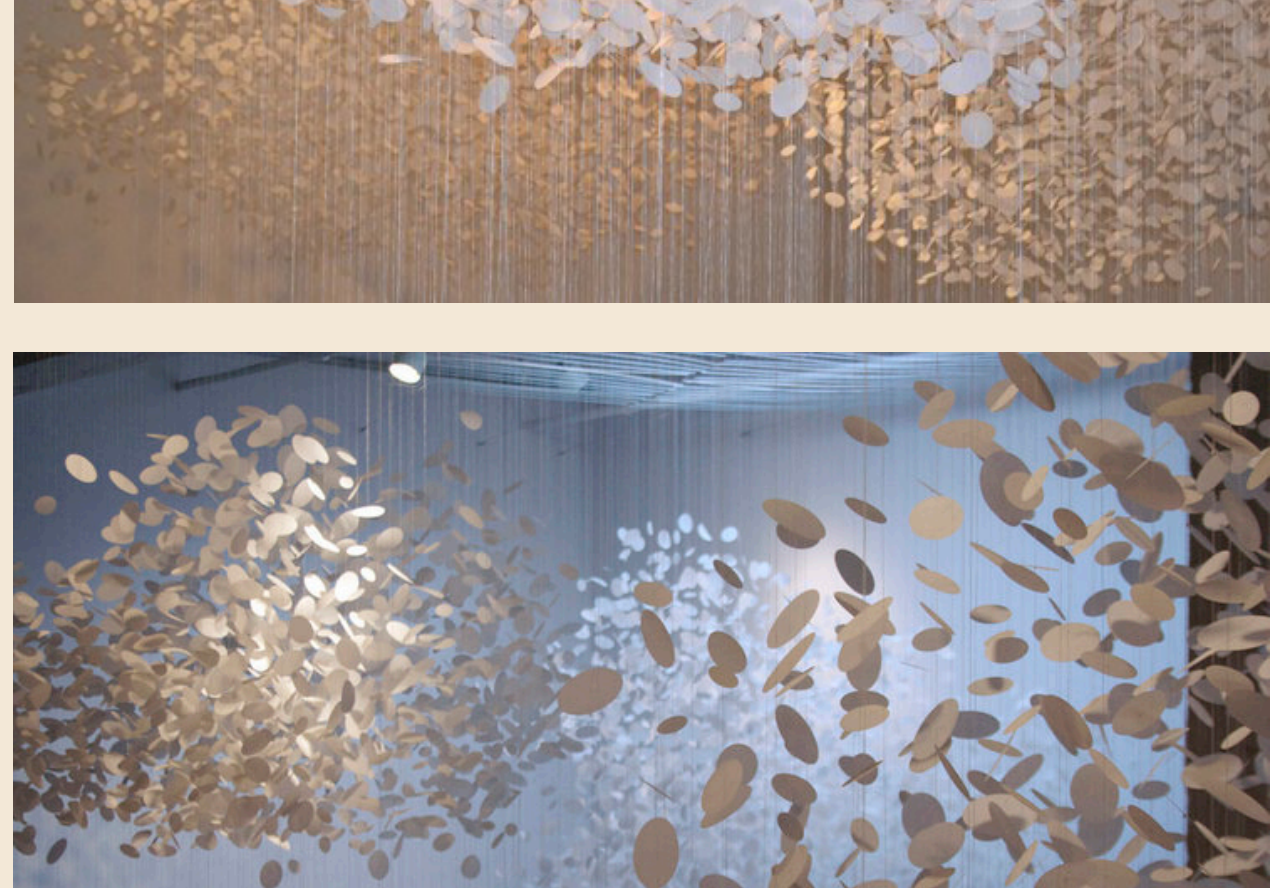
In her life as a painter, K.M. Graham (1913–2008) represented views in Ontario and the far north with vibrant colours. *Arctic Night with Whiplash, Northern Lights*, 1987, shows the northern lights glowing above the landscape with a bright, playful, and otherworldly beauty. The rich blues contrast against the warm sinuous line of the lights dancing across the sky. Graham travelled to Kinngait in 1971 and returned as an artist in residence in the following years. She ventured on this opportunity a decade into her career as a professional artist, which she only began at the age of fifty. As a widow and mother, and without formal training, Graham exhibited the bravery, calling, and vision that we all wish we could show. She personified the draw that we all feel to the creative and sublime, to be artists, and to find our voices.

**Rachel Read**

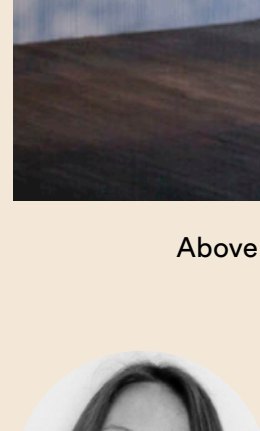
Curriculum Executive

SKATING CARNIVAL,  
VICTORIA RINK

*by William Notman*



William Notman, *Skating Carnival, Victoria Rink, Montreal*, 1870, McCord Museum



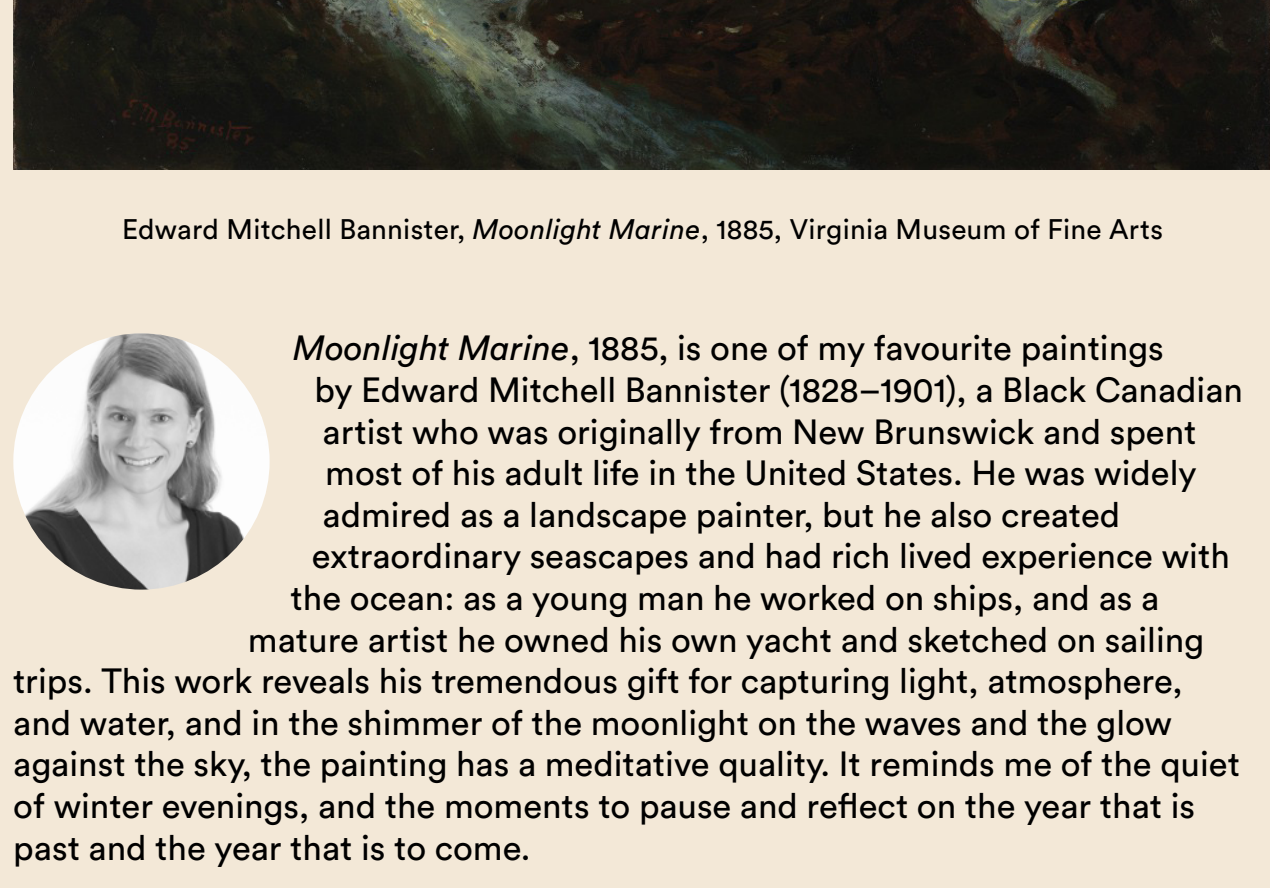
This festive scene by photographer [William Notman](#) (1826–1891) shows a well-dressed crowd at a skating event held in the winter of 1870 in honour of Prince Arthur, who was in Montreal at the time for military training. *Skating Carnival, Victoria Rink* was the pioneering artist’s most ambitious experiment with composite photography—a technique that he developed and popularized at a time when cameras were not yet capable of clearly recording a moving crowd. In advance of the event, Notman took over three hundred individual photographs of costumed attendees in his studio and arranged them into a composite image on a drawn background, which he then re-photographed and hand-painted. Perfectly capturing the merry atmosphere of the skating carnival, Notman’s work celebrates the unique joys of winter.

**Tara Ng**

Editorial and Programming Associate

## JULIE AND THE UNIVERSE

*by Jean Paul Lemieux*



Jean Paul Lemieux, *Julie and the Universe (Julie et l'univers)*, 1965, Pierre Lassonde Collection



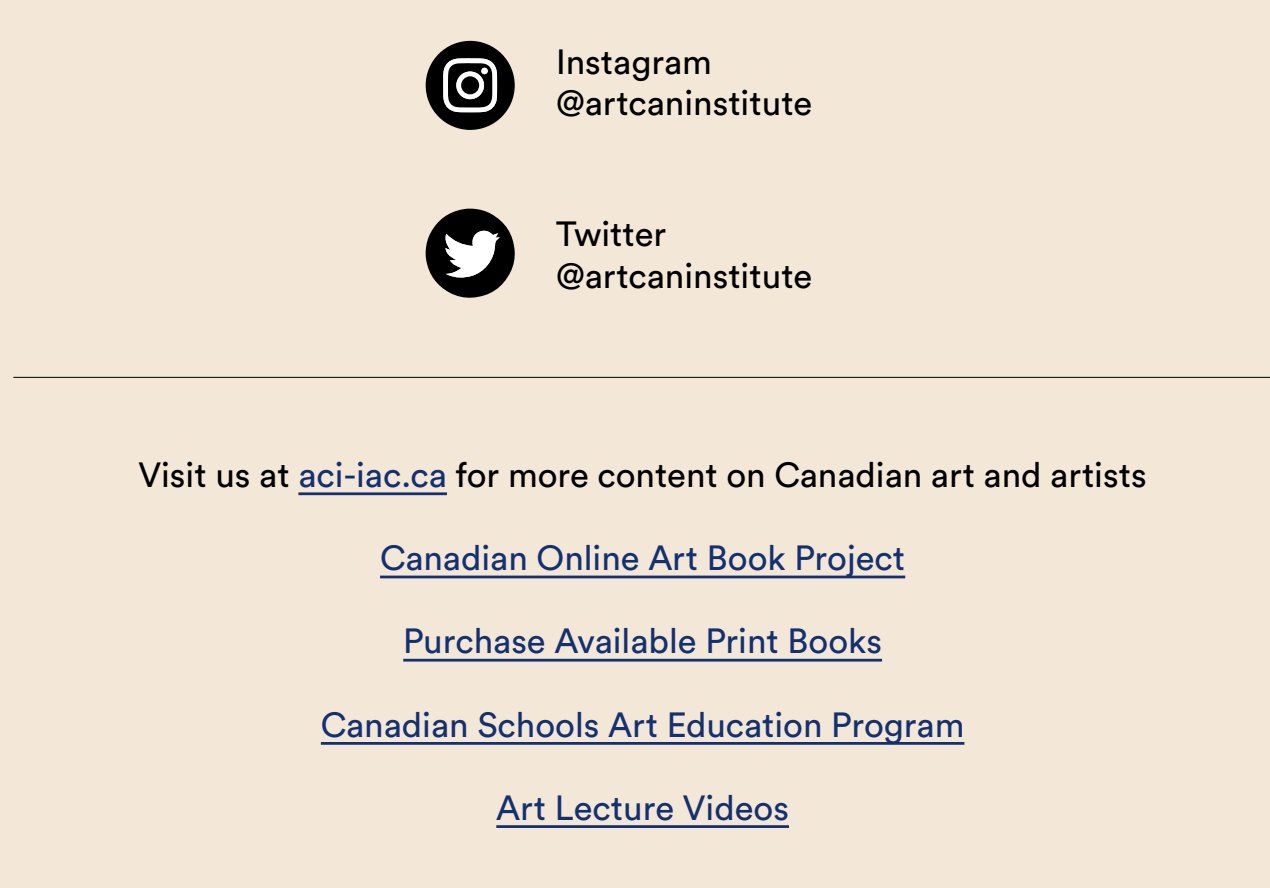
There is something comforting in a quiet, solitary winter walk, and no one conveys this with quite the same eloquence and reverence as Québécois artist [Jean Paul Lemieux](#) (1904–1990). Best known for his thoughtful paintings of singular subjects framed by expansive landscapes, Lemieux reinvigorated Canada’s interest in figurative art, despite the increasing popularity of abstraction. His passion for Quebec City, where he lived and worked for over half a century, reverberates throughout works like this one, and these earnest depictions won Lemieux national and international recognition. *Julie and the Universe*, 1965, is captivating for its complex meditation on the human condition. Wrapped up warmly in her canary coat, Julie holds the viewer in her gaze, silently sharing this moment. Although she seems alone in the vast snowy landscape, Julie is far from it. The whole of time and space spreads out infinitely around her—a universe to keep her company.

**Simone Wharton**

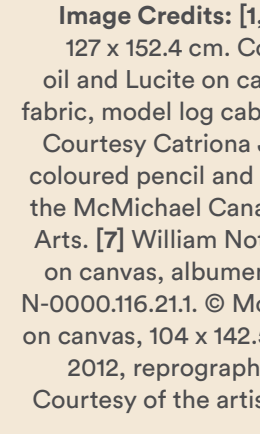
Web and Layout Director

## CLOUDSCAPE

*by Hannah Claus*



Above and below: Hannah Claus, *cloudscape*, 2012, courtesy of the artist



This enchanting installation by Kanien’kehá:ka/English artist Hannah Claus (b.1969) is a master class in the power of art to create immersive, awe-inspiring moments of gratitude and reflection. *Cloudscape*, 2012, consists of numerous pieces of rephotographic film seemingly suspended in time, mobilizing materials, light, and open space in a careful and captivating balance. The cloud motif makes reference to the Sky World central in the Haudenosaunee creation teaching—and for Claus, holds further resonance in invoking themes of creativity and community. In a year that has posed exceptional challenges and has at many times felt like a “dark cloud,” Claus’s uplifting and transformative work invites us all to take a moment to reflect on the silver linings.

**Emma Doubt**

Editorial and Education Associate

## MOONLIGHT MARINE

*by Edward Mitchell Bannister*



Edward Mitchell Bannister, *Moonlight Marine*, 1885, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



*Moonlight Marine*, 1885, is one of my favourite paintings by Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828–1901), a Black Canadian artist who was originally from New Brunswick and spent most of his adult life in the United States. He was widely admired as a landscape painter, but he also created extraordinary seascapes and had rich lived experience with the ocean: as a young man he worked on ships, and as a mature artist he owned his own yacht and sketched on sailing trips. This work reveals his tremendous gift for capturing light, atmosphere, and water, and in the shimmer of the moonlight on the waves and the glow against the sky, the painting has a meditative quality. It reminds me of the quiet of winter evenings, and the moments to pause and reflect on the year that is to come.

**Jocelyn Anderson**

Editorial and Education Director

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