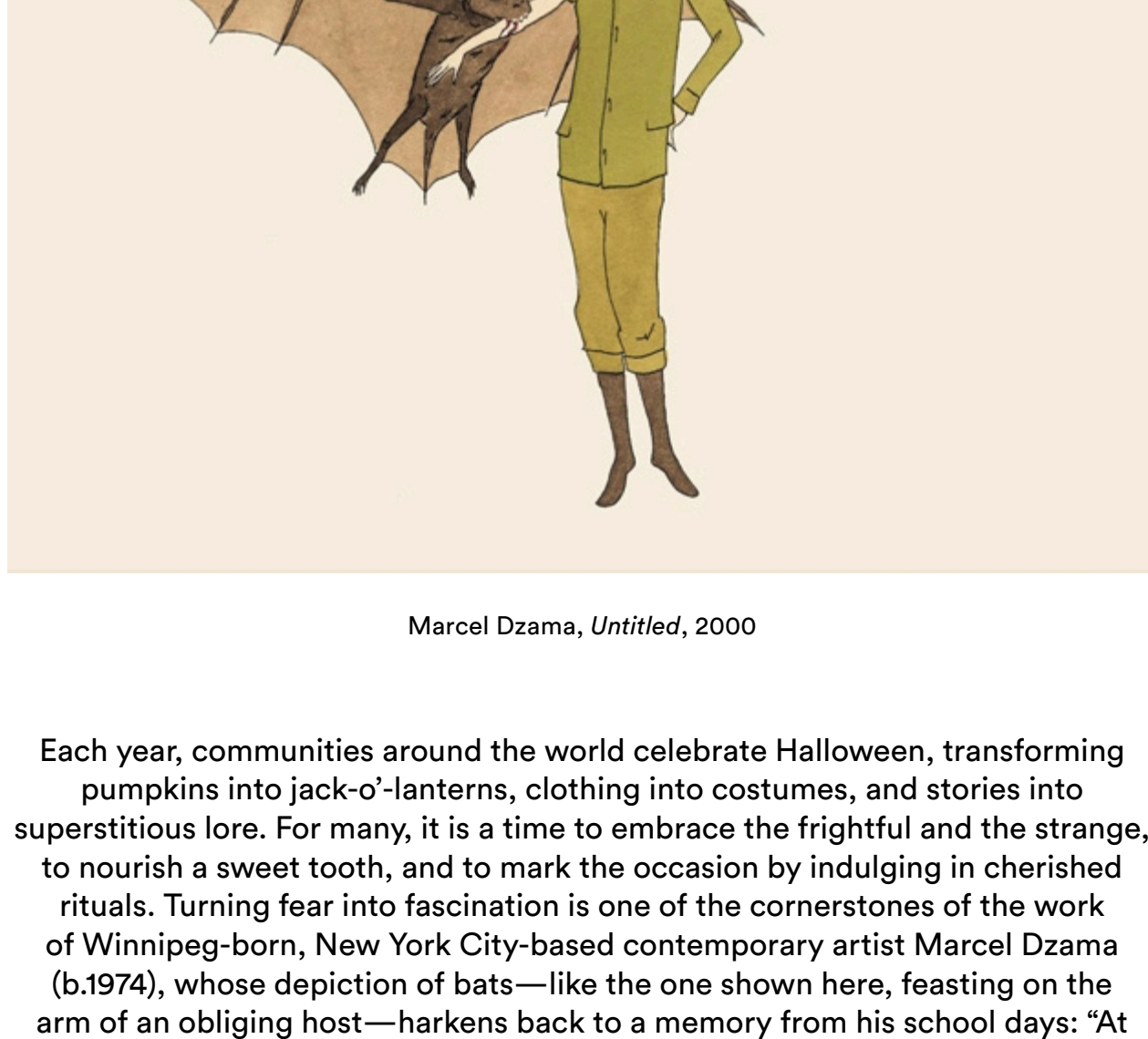


HAUNTING RITUALS ART FOR HALLOWEEN

Get into the spirit of All Hallows' Eve
through the work of 5 artists in Canada



Marcel Dzama, *Untitled*, 2000

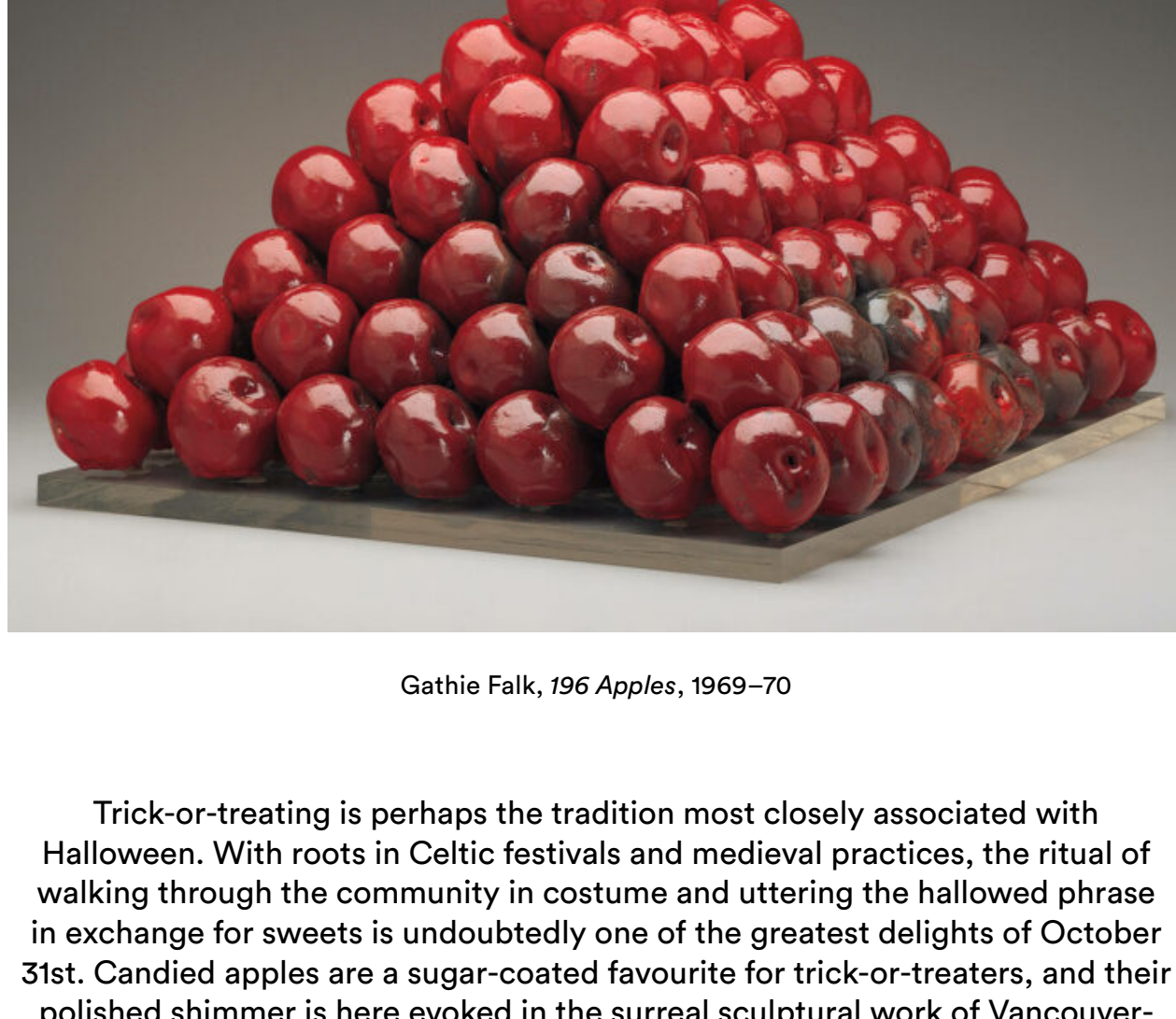
Each year, communities around the world celebrate Halloween, transforming pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, clothing into costumes, and stories into superstitious lore. For many, it is a time to embrace the frightful and the strange, to nourish a sweet tooth, and to mark the occasion by indulging in cherished rituals. Turning fear into fascination is one of the cornerstones of the work of Winnipeg-born, New York City-based contemporary artist Marcel Dzama (b.1974), whose depiction of bats—like the one shown here, feasting on the arm of an obliging host—harkens back to a memory from his school days: “At my school, we were using these trucks as classrooms....There were boards beneath these trucks. One day, my friend and I took away the boards and out flew the bats. It was my first time seeing bats.” The thrill of the unfamiliar is one of the great delights of the festivities, and artists in Canada have captured the sensations of the season in riveting and unexpected ways.

From all of us at the ACI Education Program, Happy Halloween.

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Candied Apples



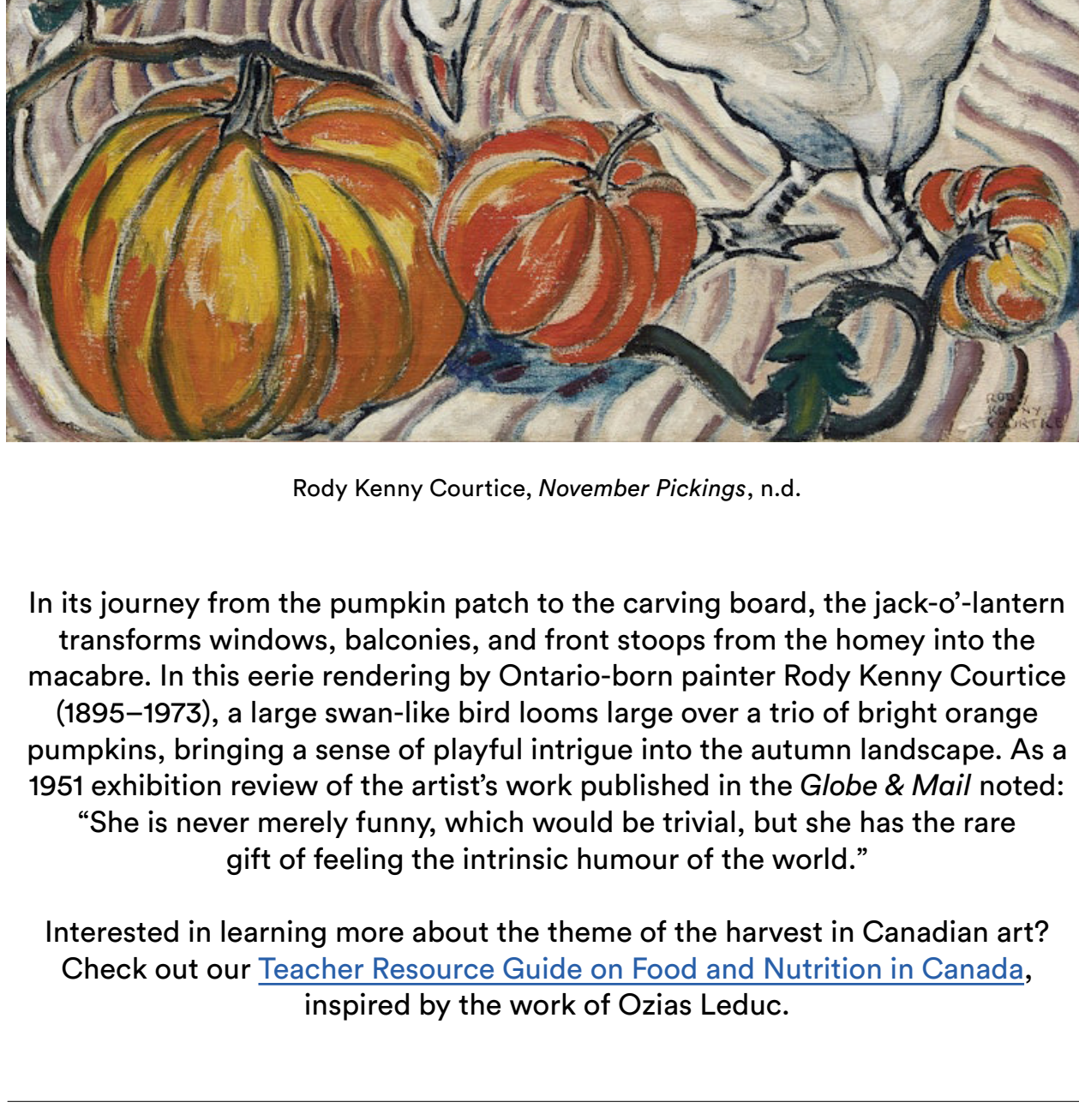
Gathie Falk, *196 Apples*, 1969–70

Trick-or-treating is perhaps the tradition most closely associated with Halloween. With roots in Celtic festivals and medieval practices, the ritual of walking through the community in costume and uttering the hallowed phrase in exchange for sweets is undoubtedly one of the greatest delights of October 31st. Candied apples are a sugar-coated favourite for trick-or-treaters, and their polished shimmer is here evoked in the surreal sculptural work of Vancouver-based artist Gathie Falk (b.1928). One of the country's most captivating artists, here Falk transforms an everyday snack into an inedible handmade marvel.

Read more in

[Gathie Falk: Life & Work](#) by author Michelle Jacques.

In the Pumpkin Patch

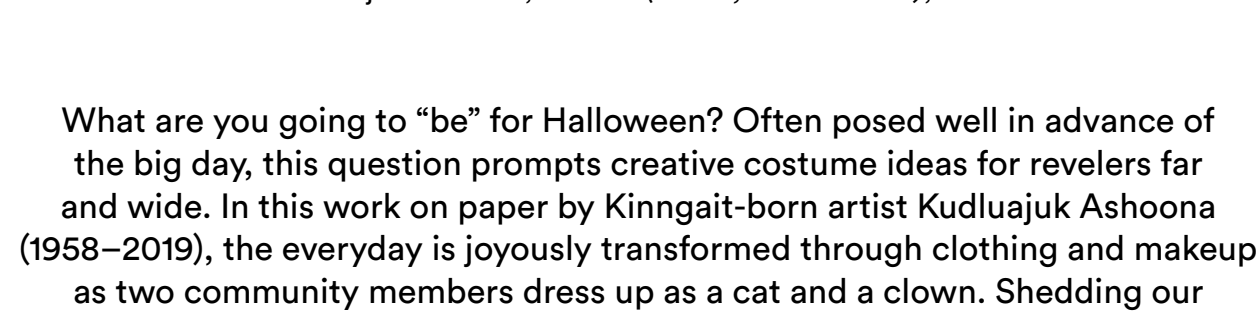


Rody Kenny Courtice, *November Pickings*, n.d.

In its journey from the pumpkin patch to the carving board, the jack-o'-lantern transforms windows, balconies, and front stoops from the homey into the macabre. In this eerie rendering by Ontario-born painter Rody Kenny Courtice (1895–1973), a large swan-like bird looms large over a trio of bright orange pumpkins, bringing a sense of playful intrigue into the autumn landscape. As a 1951 exhibition review of the artist's work published in the *Globe & Mail* noted: “She is never merely funny, which would be trivial, but she has the rare gift of feeling the intrinsic humour of the world.”

Interested in learning more about the theme of the harvest in Canadian art? Check out our [Teacher Resource Guide on Food and Nutrition in Canada](#), inspired by the work of Ozias Leduc.

Creative Costumes

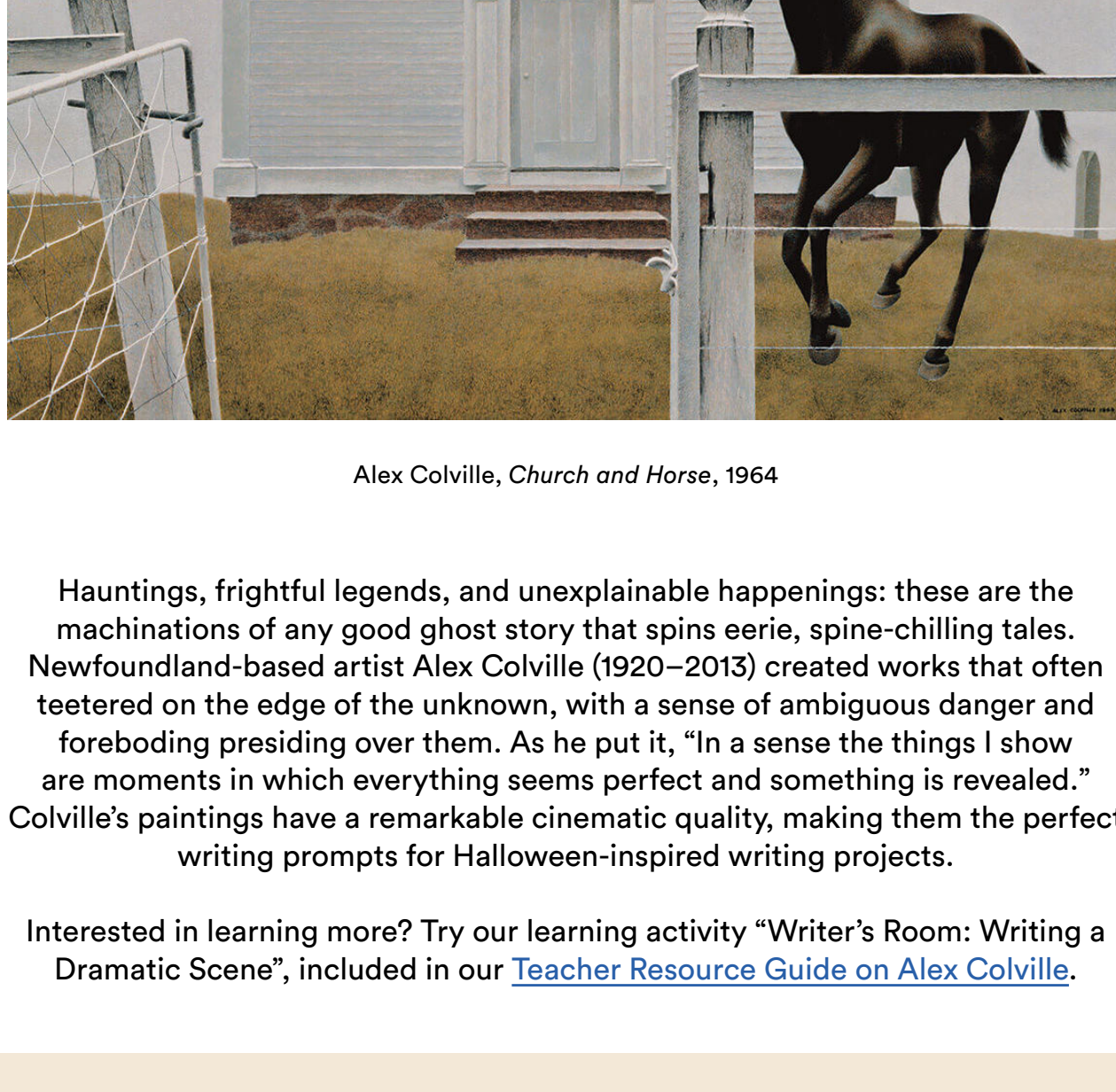


Kudluajuk Ashoona, *Untitled (Clown, Cat Costume)*, 2019

What are you going to “be” for Halloween? Often posed well in advance of the big day, this question prompts creative costume ideas for revelers far and wide. In this work on paper by Kinngait-born artist Kudluajuk Ashoona (1958–2019), the everyday is joyously transformed through clothing and makeup as two community members dress up as a cat and a clown. Shedding our everyday attire in favour of the fantastical is a key ingredient of All Hallows' Eve celebrations, and a welcome annual milestone.

Learn more about this artist [here](#).

Ghost Stories



Alex Colville, *Church and Horse*, 1964

Hauntings, frightful legends, and unexplainable happenings: these are the machinations of any good ghost story that spins eerie, spine-chilling tales. Newfoundland-based artist Alex Colville (1920–2013) created works that often teetered on the edge of the unknown, with a sense of ambiguous danger and foreboding presiding over them. As he put it, “In a sense the things I show are moments in which everything seems perfect and something is revealed.” Colville's paintings have a remarkable cinematic quality, making them the perfect writing prompts for Halloween-inspired writing projects.

Interested in learning more? Try our learning activity “Writer's Room: Writing a Dramatic Scene”, included in our [Teacher Resource Guide on Alex Colville](#).

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Launched in 2013, the Art Canada Institute is the only national institution whose mandate is to promote the study of an inclusive multi-vocal Canadian art history to as broad an audience as possible, in both English and French, within Canada and internationally. The ACI works with more than fifty of Canada's leading art historians, curators, and visual culture experts who are dedicated to the creation of authoritative original content on the people, themes, and topics that have defined Canadian art history.

We are creating a central digital resource to tell the world about Canada's most important works of art and where they are located. By functioning as an online art museum, a [digital library](#), and an interactive Canadian art encyclopedia, the ACI is an indispensable resource on Canada's visual heritage.

Visit us at aci-iac.ca

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