

# ART CANADA INSTITUTE

## *Annual Report*



*The Photography*  
EDITION

2023  
2024

*Art Canada Institute*

FOUNDED 2013

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023–2024

*Celebrating Photography*



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ROSEMARY GILLIAT EATON, *Inuit Children Playing ‘Leap frog,’ Qikiqtaaluk Region, Nunavut* (detail), c.1962, Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society.





*Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History* by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons, digital edition published by the Art Canada Institute in fall 2023. The first comprehensive book of its kind to be published in Canada.

# From the ACI Chair of the Board & the Executive Director

Google “photography in Canada” and you’ll see a major impact of our work over this past year. The search engine’s first recommendation is the Art Canada Institute. Although camera-made images—like the many that illustrate this report—have become thoroughly integrated into this country’s psyche, no comprehensive book existed on this subject until September 2023 when ACI published *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History* by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons. We have subtitled this year’s annual report *The Photography Edition* for two key reasons: camera-based art has been a focal point of the Art Canada Institute’s productivity over the last twelve months. And, more importantly, ACI is now the go-to resource for the history of photography in Canada.

Until the Art Canada Institute published *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History*, there was no book that told the remarkable account of how Canadian artists, with camera in hand, changed the way we look at politics, portraiture, landscape, ethnography; our families, streets, advertising; our current events. The launch of this work filled an immense void in the Canadian cultural landscape and continued the mission that ACI began when the institute launched in 2013: to democratize the country’s visual culture, to make it available to all regardless of one’s

proximity to a bricks-and-mortar museum or knowledge of Canadian art, and to promote the subject around the world. The Art Canada Institute was founded to be a digital-first, free-of-fee-to-users organization. So, like all of our publications, *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989* was released first as an online book, for anyone in the world to access, for no charge, in either English or French. In a world where 91 per cent of the population uses their cellphones to communicate and learn, ACI is the country’s only resource of its kind to ensure that there are zero barriers for



*The launch of Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History filled an immense void in the Canadian cultural landscape and continued the mission that ACI began when the institute launched in 2013: to democratize the country’s visual culture and to make it available to all regardless of one’s proximity to a bricks-and-mortar museum or knowledge of Canadian art.*



audiences, both in Canada and abroad, who want to learn about this country’s art. Only after we had completed this landmark digital release did we launch a print edition of *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989*, in May 2024.

As the following pages will show you, while *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989* was a highlight of our last fiscal year, there is much else to celebrate. The Art Canada Institute is an institution with five distinct pillars of programming. In addition to our growing library of books, ACI’s open-access, original, and multivocal content includes pan-Canadian art education guides for teachers, in-person events, funding for scholars making Canadian art a more inclusive discipline, and a weekly newsletter dedicated to sharing how art is a door to understanding all aspects of life. We have documented in this report how, in each of these areas, ACI has established a new vision for the future of Canadian art. We have shared how, collectively, this programming that reaches audiences in 115 countries draws attention and audiences to traditional bricks-and-mortar institutions.

None of this would be possible without the Art Canada Institute’s extraordinary content creators who author our ground-breaking resources. It would also not be possible without the generosity of ACI’s benefactors and sponsors as well as the talent and dedication of our Board of Directors. As an organization that was launched and has grown without government support, we are grateful to this tremendous body of stakeholders for believing in our vision and helping us realize the powerful programming outlined in the following pages. This talented and committed group has allowed the Art Canada Institute to change the country’s cultural outlook for the better and to continuously scale new heights.

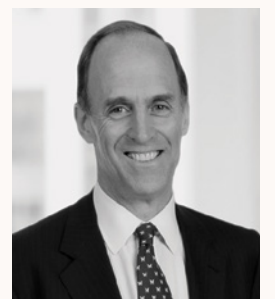
With thanks to the scholars, thinkers, writers, sponsors, and donors whose names are included in this report, the Art Canada Institute continues to produce and publish new and innovative ways to achieve our mission: to further education about and awareness of Canadian art and its history free of charge, in French and English; to connect audiences to art in museums across the country; to give a platform to the country’s artists, curators, and scholars; and to provide up-to-date accounts on news about them.

The Art Canada Institute serves as a national institution committed to bringing this country’s art to a twenty-first-century audience via twenty-first-century technology. We remain dedicated to showcasing the art of this country, to helping all understand its relevance and power, and to revealing how this shared history of ours is a door to building a stronger and better future.

—Sara Angel and Tim Griffin, September 2024



**SARA ANGEL, CM, PhD**  
Founder and Executive  
Director, Art Canada Institute



**TIM GRIFFIN**  
Chair, Board of Directors,  
Art Canada Institute



# About the Art Canada Institute

At the Art Canada Institute, we believe that art is for everyone. At the Art Canada Institute, we deliver content on the country's art and its history that is easy to understand and to access. ACI is the only organization in the country that offers a digital-first approach to promoting artists as well as art historians and educators. We do this by providing an ever-growing, open-access (paywall-free), digital platform to document, teach, and share the story of visual creativity in Canada in both English and French. We promote, foster, and facilitate a twenty-first-century conversation about our artistic heritage through our programming, which includes the following:

**I. BOOK PUBLISHING**

**II. KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12 ART EDUCATION**

**III. RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS**

**IV. A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER**

**V. EVENTS**

Before ACI launched in 2013, accessible and authoritative information on Canadian visual art could scarcely be found online. Over the past decade, our work has transformed the digital and cultural landscape.

~~2023~~  
2024




TOP: FRED HERZOG, *Boys on Shed*, 1962, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.  
BOTTOM: FRED HERZOG, *Curtains*, 1972, Equinox Gallery, Vancouver.





# Our Audience, Our Impact

We believe that art should be accessible to everyone regardless of location or knowledge of the subject. This belief has resulted in record-breaking growth across many of our platforms and programming initiatives, as well as our donor community. ACI serves a wide range of highly-engaged audiences—from grade school students to university professors; from art lovers at home to those around the world; and from the art-curious to the art-obsessed.



48

EDUCATION GUIDES  
PUBLISHED TO DATE

87

ART BOOKS  
PUBLISHED TO DATE






54

NEW DONORS  
JOINING OUR  
GIVING COMMUNITY

350+

YOUNG ARTISTS ENGAGED  
IN OUR STUDENT ART  
CHALLENGE\* (UP 100%)







7,600+

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS  
(UP 100%)

2

PEER-ADJUDICATED  
COMMUNITY ART  
EDUCATION AWARDS







120+

COUNTRIES  
REACHED ON  
OUR PLATFORMS

1.1+  
MILLION

AUDIENCE MEMBERS\*







27,000+

DOWNLOADS OF  
PDF CONTENT\*

191

DONORS IN OUR  
GIVING COMMUNITY






13.4+  
MILLION

REACHED ON  
OUR SOCIAL MEDIA\*  
(UP MORE THAN 300%)

60,900+

VISITORS TO  
OUR EDUCATION  
PROGRAM\*  
(UP MORE THAN 70%)



\*INDICATES RECORD GROWTH

# Governance & the Board of Directors

The Art Canada Institute is regulated by a board of community leaders with expertise in not-for-profit management, philanthropy, digital media, finance, law, and education and a profound appreciation and passion for art in Canada.

—Executive Committee—



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*Board Chair*  
Former CEO and Chair, Connor, Clark & Lunn Private Capital



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Honorary Governor, York University;  
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Art enthusiast and not-for-profit director; Director, National Gallery of Canada Foundation



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University Professor Emerita and Senior Scholar, York University



**SAMMY LAU**  
Co-founder, Granite Technologies; Growth Marketing Leader



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Curator, artist, author, and Plains Cree member, Siksika Nation; Tier 1 Canada Research Chair, OCAD University



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**SUSAN WORTZMAN**  
Partner, McCarthy Tétrault LLP

*It has been my pleasure and honour to work with the 2023–2024 directors of the Art Canada Institute. Their combined expertise, wisdom, generosity, and passion for this country’s visual culture has enabled ACI to move from strength to strength and become the nation’s go-to resource for learning about art and artists.*  
—Tim Griffin, Chair of the Art Canada Institute Board of Directors





Some of ACI’s content creators, authors, and academic advisers. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ANONG MIGWANS BEAM, visual artist and author; GAËTANE VERNA, Wexner Center for the Arts; CARMEN ROBERTSON, Carleton University; PIERRE-OLIVIER OUELLET, Université du Québec à Montréal; JESSICA BRADLEY, art historian, curator, and former gallerist; IAN THOM, independent curator and author, previously at Vancouver Art Gallery; and MING TIAMPO, Carleton University.

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Art Canada Institute

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LISA BALDISSERA, PhD  
Griffin Art Projects

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Art Galleries

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Wexner Center for the Arts

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ANNE WHITELAW, PhD  
Concordia University

DARLENE COWARD WIGHT, MA  
Winnipeg Art Gallery

JOYCE ZEMANS, CM, MA  
Professor Emeritus, York University

† Although deceased, these individuals  
are remembered by the Art Canada  
Institute. François-Marc Gagnon wrote  
three books for ACI, David P. Silcox  
wrote one book for ACI, and Dennis  
Reid was an important adviser.

# Content Creators, Authors & Academic Advisers

The strength of the Art Canada Institute’s programming is predicated on the fact that we bring together the country’s leading art historians, curators, and educators. These individuals support ACI in the following ways: by creating our content, by peer-reviewing submissions, by mentoring our fellows, by adjudicating applications to our programs, and by offering strategic advice. We are grateful for the guidance and work of the following talented individuals who contribute to the excellence and high calibre of our programs.



## *An Acknowledgement of the Land & Its Caretakers*

The Art Canada Institute acknowledges that the land where we live, work, and create has been the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Huron-Wendat.



The Art Canada Institute is grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on the traditional lands of Indigenous peoples, lands that are today home to many different First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities from across Turtle Island and Inuit Nunangat. We recognize the enormous diversity of Indigenous art practices that are intricately connected to the land, and we are grateful and honoured to learn about them. We respect the teachings of Indigenous communities and the Elders and Knowledge Keepers about the land, and we appreciate every opportunity to collaborate in presenting our programming.

We know that, as an institution, we have a responsibility to reflect on our impact on the land and communities. In

acknowledging the history and ongoing systemic practices of colonialism on Turtle Island / Canada that have oppressed Indigenous peoples, the Art Canada Institute also acknowledges that our organization has benefitted from colonialism. We are committed to actively working toward reconciliation with Indigenous communities, and we strive to learn more about Indigenous worldviews; to develop and sustain constructive relations with Indigenous advisers, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers; and to commemorate the work of Indigenous artists. The Art Canada Institute wishes in this Land Acknowledgement to express deep respect for Indigenous peoples and their communities, as well as their art traditions and artists.

## *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*

The Art Canada Institute is honoured to represent the art and tell the stories of the artists across Canada through our programming.



We strive to reflect and represent the diversity of art makers in Canada throughout the history of this country, cognizant of the fact that many did not, and do not, have support, platforms, or recognition for their practices. The Art Canada Institute is committed to working with artists and art historians who are Indigenous, racialized, living with disabilities, and women, and those who identify as one or more of the identities within the 2SLGBTQI+ community. These values are central to every pillar of our programming and the way we work.

In our view, diversity and inclusion create excellence. We are committed to placing diversity, equity, and inclusion

at the centre of our content, personnel, and governance. Our goal is to create a study and dialogue around Canada's art and its history balanced by inclusion, the desire to create equal opportunity, and the realization of difference and of inequity. We know that a diverse community is stronger, richer, and more sustainable than one that excludes people. Inclusion is the path we travel to understand the roots of our identities and disciplines, and we look to recognize how our scholarship both affects and is shaped by society and culture. We actively work toward a future of reconciliation and social justice, and we are grateful to all who are guiding us in ongoing learning and in doing better.



JULY  
2023

ACI welcomes new researchers into its Fellowships Program, supporting important work on underrepresented artists in Canada.

bottom left: Violet Keene Perinchief, *A Modern Miss*, c.1940; bottom right: Helena Martin Franco, *Altero(s)filia o los Juegos de Fuerza de Fritta Caro, Meter el Hombre*, 2018.



AUG  
2023

The first K-12 Teacher Resource Guide in ACI's 2023–2024 education program lineup is finalized.

Cover of *Learn about Regional Heritage through explorations of historical and contemporary art in Ottawa*.

SEPT  
2023

ACI publishes its largest and most ambitious volume to date: *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989* by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons.

Cover of *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989* by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons.



FEB  
2024



In recognition of Black History Month, ACI publishes a newsletter spotlighting the remarkable work and contributions of Trinidadian Canadian artist Denyse Thomasos.

February 2, 2024 Newsletter "Denyse Thomasos: Her Epic Painting and Vision."



OCT  
2023

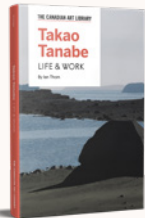
ACI proudly presents new and recent works by renowned contemporary artist Kent Monkman at the Art Toronto fair.

Left: *iskonikan (Pink)*, 2023; Right: Kent Monkman, *We Were Joyful and Felt Safe*, 2023.

ACI proudly celebrates the launch of the print edition of *Takao Tanabe: Life & Work* by Ian Thom with an event at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Cover of *Takao Tanabe: Life & Work* by Ian Thom.

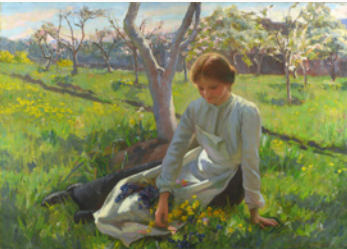
MAR  
2024



NOV  
2023

ACI publishes *Sophie Pemberton: Life & Work* by Kathryn Bridge to coincide with a major retrospective of Pemberton's art at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

Sophie Pemberton, *Spring*, 1902.



The ACI Education Program is honoured with the Ontario Art Education Association's Community Art Educator Award.

Students at work in a classroom art studio.

APR  
2024



DEC  
2023

Our 2024 365 Days Calendar drops—an exclusive not-for-sale ACI item created with thanks to our benefactors. We look forward to the year to come.

Cover of 365 Days of Canadian Art, 2024 Edition.

MAY  
2024

ACI celebrates the publication of the print edition of *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History* by Ray Cronin with an event at the Halifax Public Library.

Photograph of Halifax book launch held at the Halifax Public Library, May 8, 2024.



JAN  
2024

Winter submissions to ACI's popular educational initiative, the Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge, open to high school students across Canada.

Cover of the 2024 Student Challenge Creativity Booklet for Canadian teachers.



The ACI Education Program is honoured with a Community Art Education Award from the Canadian Society for Education Through Art, presented at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design in Halifax.

ACI staff at the CSEA conference in Halifax.



JUNE  
2024



# *Art Canada Institute* Pillars of Programming

Since 2013, the Art Canada Institute has grown from an organization with a single focus—creating online art books about key artists in this country’s history—to an institution with five distinct pillars of programming. ACI has developed into a multi-faceted resource that makes this country’s art and history accessible to all. We fulfill our mandate through the following key areas of activity:

## **I. PUBLISHING**

Print and online art books

## **II. ART EDUCATION**

For students in kindergarten to Grade 12

## **III. RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS**

To redefine Canadian art history

## **IV. ACI NEWS**

Weekly newsletters on contemporary and historical art

## **V. ACI EVENTS**

Connecting artists to audiences across Canada

~~2023~~  
2024



EDWARD BURTYNSKY, *Kennecott Copper Mine, Bingham Valley, Utah* (detail), 1983, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.





# The Canadian Online Art Book Project

No other organization in the country offers what we do: expert-authored, open-access, digital art books, published in both English and French. Since the launch of our first title in November 2013—*Jack Chambers: Life & Work*—ACI’s dynamic flagship program has released sixty-two books.

The Canadian Online Art Book Project is a growing digital library of publications written by the country’s leading art experts on artists who have made critical contributions to the evolution of the nation’s art and its history. In the 2023–2024 season, the Art Canada Institute’s library expanded with four new books on the following artists: Sophie Pemberton, acclaimed nineteenth-century painter from British Columbia; the revered contemporary painter Takao Tanabe; Margaret Watkins, the bold talent from Hamilton, Ontario who broke new ground in twentieth-century advertising photography; and Doris McCarthy, the only Canadian landscapist to work in every part of the country. In addition, we published *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History*, a sweeping survey of art and visual culture in the Maritime hub, and *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989*, our largest and most ambitious thematic survey to date.

Every title published by ACI is released simultaneously in six formats—which means our audiences have maximum

access to our content. Our editions include an English-language desktop version, a French-language desktop version, an English-language mobile version, a French-language mobile version, an English-language PDF version, and a French-language PDF version.

Titles in the Canadian Online Art Book Project are richly illustrated with a broad array of artwork, archival, and documentary images, and each features core sections that include Biography, Key Works, Significance & Critical Issues, Style & Technique, Sources & Resources, and Where to See—a chapter that links the art in our books to institutions across the country. All content in ACI titles is original and is commissioned specifically for the Canadian Online Art Book Project.

In the near future, we look forward to releasing books on artists Carl Beam, Tim Whiten, Eli Bornstein, Hannah Maynard, Betty Goodwin, Kiss & Tell, George Reid, and Yousuf Karsh—among many others.

## SPONSORS OF 2023–2024 ONLINE ART BOOKS

*We gratefully acknowledge:*

*Photography in Canada, 1839–1989*—GOLD SPONSORS: David Binet, Elizabeth and Rudy Kerklaan, Elian Turner and Poonam Puri, Morden Yolles. SILVER SPONSORS: Connor, Clark & Lunn Foundation, Jane and Michael Freund, Tim and Darka Griffin, Christine Laptuta, Larry and Maureen Lunn, Dara and Marvin Singer. BRONZE SPONSORS: Mike and Kim Downs, Michael Flux and Marnie Smith, Don Fraser and Jane Hudson, Carole and Howard Tanenbaum. *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History*—LEAD SPONSORS: Fred & Elizabeth Foundation. TITLE SPONSORS: Rob and Monique Sobey; Jim Spatz and Valerie MacDonald. CONTRIBUTING SPONSOR: Peter and Elizabeth Clarke.

*Sophie Pemberton: Life & Work*—Cowley Abbott

*Takao Tanabe: Life & Work*—The Audain Foundation, with support from Mira Godard Gallery

*Margaret Watkins: Life & Work*—Alexandra Bennett

*Doris McCarthy: Life & Work*—John and Katia Bianchini

## 2023–2024 TITLES:

*Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History* by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons

*Halifax Art & Artists:*

*An Illustrated History* by Ray Cronin

*Sophie Pemberton: Life & Work* by Kathryn Bridge

*Takao Tanabe: Life & Work* by Ian Thom

*Margaret Watkins: Life & Work* by Mary O'Connor

*Doris McCarthy: Life & Work* by John G. Hatch

## 2024–2025 TITLES:

*Carl Beam: Life & Work* by Anong Migwans Beam

*Betty Goodwin: Life & Work* by Jessica Bradley

*Eli Bornstein: Life & Work* by Roald Nasgaard

*Tim Whiten: Life & Work* by Carolyn Bell Farrell

*Quebec City Art & Artists: An Illustrated History*

by Michèle Grandbois

*Kiss & Tell: Lesbian Art & Activism*

by Kristen Hutchison



# Art Canada Institute *Print Editions*

While the Art Canada Institute was founded with a mission to create digital books, the high quality of our online editions has led to a demand for them in print. To that end, we offer a number of our titles in hardcover format.

Though the Art Canada Institute is best known for our robust online library of digital titles, there is also a demand for our materials in print format. As such, ACI launched the Canadian Art Library, publishing several of our most popular online titles in print. Beautifully designed and visually illustrated, these hardcover volumes offer in a tangible format the exact content that we make available online free of charge. As well, our print offerings have expanded to include Limited Edition Artists' Books and include new titles on such revered contemporary artists as Kent Monkman (B.1965) and Shary Boyle (B.1972).

In the past year, we have added four critical volumes to our print book offerings. These include a new title by Ian Thom on celebrated Japanese-Canadian painter Takao

Tanabe (B.1926) and one by Maria Rosa Lehmann on avant-garde French-Canadian artist Alfred Pellán (1906–1988). As well, ACI published two of its most ambitious thematic volumes yet. The first of these is a print edition of the latest in our city book series, *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History* by Ray Cronin, comprising a sweeping overview of art and visual culture in the Maritime capital from the pre-contact period to the present day. The second is *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History*, the tour-de-force volume by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons, which is the first comprehensive book on the history of photography in the country, offering an unprecedented exploration of an art form like no other.

## SPONSORS OF 2023–2024 PRINT EDITIONS

*We gratefully acknowledge:*

*Alfred Pellán: Life & Work*

PRINT AND ONLINE BOOK SPONSORS:  
K. James Harrison and Melinda Harrison.

*Takao Tanabe: Life & Work*

TITLE AND PRINT BOOK SPONSOR: Audain Foundation, with support from Mira Godard Gallery.  
CULTURAL PARTNER: Vancouver Art Gallery.

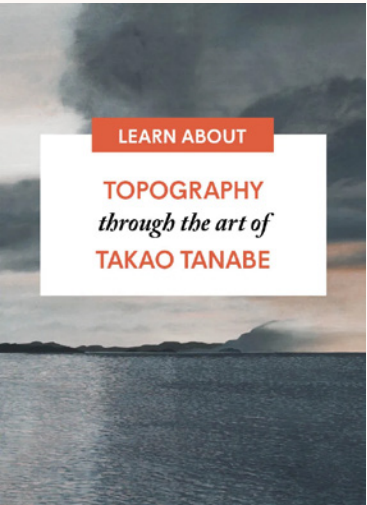
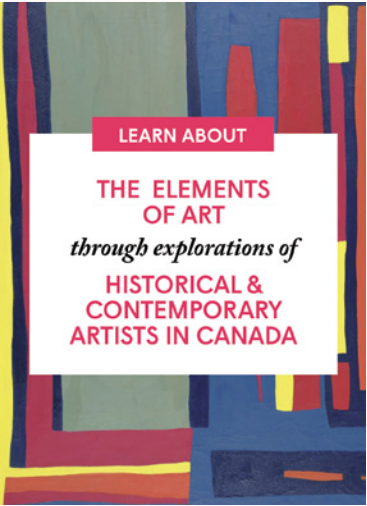
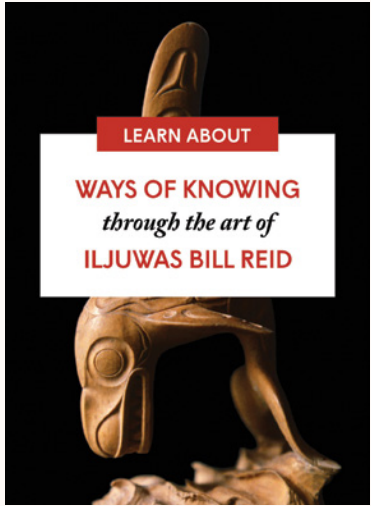
*Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History*  
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*Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History*  
LEAD SPONSOR: Fred and Elizabeth Fountain.  
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# Teacher Guides *for In-Class Learning* Kindergarten to Grade 12

The Art Canada Institute’s mission is for all students to know the names of artists in our country and to know their work. Our goal is to make art the door to understanding all subjects. Every young learner has a right to understand the long legacy of artistic greatness in Canada. Through ACI’s digital learning library—the only national initiative to facilitate cross-curricular studies through Canadian art—we are working to ensure that this is possible.

In 2023–2024, ACI published a range of multidisciplinary teacher resource guides—all available in French and English, all accessible in classrooms free of charge—to share and foster meaningful connections with students and educators across the country. These six new curriculum resources are geared toward a breadth of learning levels, from Grade 4 to Grade 12.

This past year’s education guides facilitate the following learning opportunities: a deep exploration of philosophical questions through the art of Jin-me Yoon, the study of topography through the paintings of Takao Tanabe, a critical analysis of media and advertising through the art of Margaret Watkins, and teachings on the physical regions of Canada through the art of Doris McCarthy. As well, we added a new “how-to” guide on photography in Canada to our offerings for visual arts teachers, and we continued to expand our thematic curriculum guides with a new series

on regional heritage. Together, these resources explore the work of artists from coast to coast and cover curriculum connections including geography; history; Inuit, First Nations, and Métis studies; visual arts; social studies; science; and more.

All ACI teacher guides include lesson plans, handouts, timelines, and slides. They are designed to make it easy to bring art into every classroom, from high school art studios to elementary school play spaces.

As well, over the past year, through twelve editions of our dedicated art education newsletter, focused on a balanced cultural and regional representation of leading creators in Canadian art, we addressed art-infused topics that matter most to teachers, including cultural heritage, self-representation, Black History Month, women artists in Canada, art and the environment, and much more.

**PUBLISHED GUIDES IN 2023–2024:**

- Photography* through explorations of Historical and Contemporary Art in Canada
- Regional Heritage* through explorations of Historical and Contemporary Art in Ottawa
- The Big Questions* through the art of Jin-me Yoon
- Topography* through the art of Takao Tanabe
- Media and Advertising* through the art of Margaret Watkins
- Physical Regions of Canada* through the art of Doris McCarthy

**SPONSORS OF 2023–2024 CANADIAN SCHOOLS ART EDUCATION PROGRAM**

*We gratefully acknowledge:*

The Connor, Clark & Lunn Foundation; Anonymous through Council for Canadian American Relations; The Norman and Margaret Jewison Charitable Foundation; The McLean Foundation; Power Corporation of Canada



# The Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge

In June 2024, ACI marked the fourth year of prize-winning recipients in the Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge. The depth and breadth of creativity represented in submissions to this annual ACI program speak to the resonating potential of Canadian art and its history in today’s world—and the importance of its continued cultivation for generations to come.

The Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge invites students in Grades 7 through 12 to create original artworks inspired by historical and contemporary Canadian art. Each year, ACI publishes ten new activities for visual arts teachers in order to facilitate class participation in the initiative. This year, we were delighted to share resources on a broad range of artists including Meryl McMaster, Kent Monkman, Alfred Pellán, Edward Mitchell Bannister, and Helen McNicoll, among others. In turn, students produced creative responses to the themes, styles, and approaches of these iconic creators.

Applications more than doubled this year, arriving from ten provinces. Smart, provocative, and insightful, the submissions were a testament to the power of Canadian art

history to inspire a deep sense of connection in our country’s young learners. As judges including renowned contemporary artists Karen Tam and Edward Burtynsky pored over paintings, drawings, photographs, and mixed media and digital art, students’ profound reflections on our nation and its place in the world, as well as their brilliant creative talents, came to the fore.

ACI rewarded this year’s winners with cash prizes, a dedicated newsletter sharing their accomplishments with our readership, and an online exhibition featuring their work alongside the images that captivated their imaginations. We are proud to facilitate Canada’s only incentivized student challenge centred on the history of art in this country.

## SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS FROM ACROSS CANADA

- BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School,  
Vancouver, British Columbia
- ALBERTA  
Ernest Manning High School, Calgary, Alberta
- SASKATCHEWAN  
Regina Christian School, Regina, Saskatchewan
- MANITOBA  
Fort Richmond Collegiate, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- ONTARIO  
École Publique De La Salle, Ottawa, Ontario

- QUEBEC  
Herzliah High School, Montreal, Quebec
- NEW BRUNSWICK  
Devon Middle School, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- NOVA SCOTIA  
Bauhaus Art Studio, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND  
Home school applicants, Cavendish, PEI
- NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR  
Mount Pearl Senior High School, Mount Pearl,  
Newfoundland



Grade 9 student MUYING DENG, from Regina Christian School in Saskatchewan, holding her prize-winning work, *To My Vanished Childhood*, 2024, which was inspired by *Watching the Boat*, c.1912, by HELEN MCNICOLL.



# The Student Art Inspiration Challenge How It Works

THIS YEAR’S CHALLENGE

Who are your personal heroes? What is our responsibility to the planet? How do you connect with your culture? We asked, and students across Canada answered with exceptional creations inspired by the nation’s greatest artists. Now in its fourth year, the ACI Canadian Art Inspiration Student Challenge received submissions from young makers in Grades 7 through 12 from across the country. They looked to the works of contemporary visionaries like Edward Burtynsky (b.1955) and Karen Tam (b.1977)—both of whom graciously adjudicated this year’s contest—as well as to historical trailblazers like New Brunswick-born Molly Lamb Bobak (1920–2014) and Winnipeg painter Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald (1890–1956).

HOW IT WORKS

Each new academic year, ACI publishes a Student Creativity Booklet: ten brand-new art activity ideas that are designed to stimulate engagement with historical and contemporary Canadian art. Each activity features a lead image, a question prompt for students, and a themed art-making activity to facilitate student engagement, along with links and resources for further learning. Taking the resource as a springboard, students are invited to create their own original artwork inspired by a creative leader in Canadian visual art.

**Art Activity**  
**Helen McNicoll:**  
**Memories from My Childhood**  
as inspired by the work *Watching the Boat*



Helen McNicoll, *Watching the Boat*, c.1912, oil on canvas, 54.1 x 76.8 cm. Private collection.

**What Is Your Earliest Memory?**  
One of the nation's most prolific historical female artists, Helen McNicoll garnered international critical acclaim for her bright and sunny representations of rural landscapes and nostalgic views of child subjects at play—works that helped popularize the Impressionist movement in Canada. In *Watching the Boat*, the Montreal painter captures a scene featuring a group of children standing by a river's edge, watching a toy boat float downstream. Moved by McNicoll's warm and tender treatment of an idyllic childhood moment, for this activity we encourage students to make a work of art inspired by one of their earliest memories.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide about Helen McNicoll](#)

[Watch a short learning video about Helen McNicoll](#)

**Get to Know the Artist:**  
**Helen McNicoll**  
1879–1916  
**Place of birth:**  
Toronto, Ontario (but lived and worked in Montreal)  
**Best known for:**  
Luminous canvases depicting a wide range of subjects, from landscapes and cityscapes to domestic scenes featuring women and children.

**Art Activity**  
**Alfred Pellan:**  
**Views from Away**  
as inspired by the work *Maisons de Charlevoix (Houses in Charlevoix)*, 1941



Alfred Pellan, *Maisons de Charlevoix (Houses in Charlevoix)*, 1941, oil on canvas, 63.8 x 91.4 cm, Power Corporation of Canada Art Collection, Montreal.

**What Are the Cherished Places You Have Visited?**  
In the summer of 1941, celebrated painter Alfred Pellan was invited to Charlevoix, Quebec, where he spent time with artist friends Jean Palardy (1905–1998) and Jori Smith (1907–2006). The unique traits of the region must have remained in his mind's eye, as he created vivid works like *Maisons de Charlevoix* that summer, evoking the sensational sunlight, colourful architecture, and lush green vegetation distinctive to the area. Taking a note out of Pellan's vibrant representation of his time away, and his lifelong commitment to the "irresistible urge to colour, to bring to life with a brush what I saw," we invite student works that evoke a place or location that has captured their imaginations—perhaps somewhere they have visited or travelled to, that has stayed with them.

[Read more about Alfred Pellan in an Online Art Book](#)

**Get to Know the Artist:**  
**Alfred Pellan**  
1906–1988  
**Place of birth:**  
Quebec City, Quebec  
**Best known for:**  
Detailed drawings and paintings that bridge representation and abstraction—with an emphasis on the surreal in later works.

**Art Activity**  
**Kent Monkman:**  
**Community Leaders**  
as inspired by the work *Aurora Ominika-Enosse*



Kent Monkman, *Aurora Ominika-Enosse*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 102.4 x 101.6 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

**Who Are Your Personal Heroes?**  
Contemporary Cree artist Kent Monkman's powerful portrait of Aurora Ominika-Enosse is part of a series entitled *Wîshê-achîsôwak (Shining Stars)*, which honours activists, knowledge keepers, artists, and thinkers who have had a profound influence on the artist's life. Ominika-Enosse, who is originally from Wîkewemung First Nation, works to make her community stronger through her advocacy for Indigenous youth and for the rights of Indigenous women and girls. Inspired by the many changemakers working for the betterment of the world around them, we invite students to explore Monkman's portraits of personal heroes and to create their own tribute to someone who has made a profound impact on their lives.

[Read more about Kent Monkman in an Online Art Book](#)

**Get to Know the Artist:**  
**Kent Monkman**  
1966  
**Place of birth:**  
St. Mary's, Ontario  
**Best known for:**  
Large-scale history paintings and portraits that explore Indigenous presence in Canada.

**Art Activity**  
**Karen Tam:**  
**Making Meaning**  
as inspired by the works *Sporting Life: Golf* and *Sporting Life: Football*, 2015



Karen Tam, *Sporting Life: Golf and Sporting Life: Football*, 2015, papier-mâché Chinese vases, sculpture pieces or figurines and miniature portraits, pigmented India ink on silk, 40 x 25 x 25 cm each. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Tropicale Contemporaine. Photo credit: Karen Tam.

**How Can Objects Tell Stories?**  
Through her creative practice, Montreal-based artist Karen Tam explores the identities and material cultures of Chinese diasporic communities in Canada. In this pair of sculptural objects made from papier-mâché, the artist reimagines the form of a blue and white porcelain vase, mixing historical and fantastical "rhinoceros" motifs with contemporary references to sport. Through these works, Tam demonstrates that objects have a powerful way of travelling through time and carrying the stories that matter with them. For this activity, we invite students to make objects that have a story to tell, exploring narratives about their own families, histories, or traditions in a three-dimensional creation.

[View an Online Exhibition of Karen Tam's art](#)

**Get to Know the Artist:**  
**Karen Tam**  
1977  
**Place of birth:**  
Montreal, Quebec  
**Best known for:**  
Multimedia installations, including recreated Chinese restaurants and karaoke lounges, that examine constructions and imaginations of cultures and communities.



Examples of art activities from the 2023–2024 Art Canada Institute Student Creativity Booklet. We offered teachers a free exercise book designed to stimulate engagement with historical and contemporary Canadian art. Each activity features a lead image, a question prompt for students, and a themed art-making activity to facilitate student engagement. Taking the resource as a springboard, students are invited to create their own original artwork inspired by a creative leader in Canadian visual art.

ABOVE LEFT: Grade 10 student Amelia Picard, from École Publique Secondaire De La Salle in Ottawa, in front of her prize-winning work, *Ammaakulutché and Ihkulussbiia* (diptych), 2024, which was inspired by *The Scream*, 2017 by Kent Monkman.



# Selection of 2024 Student Challenge Winners

**Canadian Art Inspiration**  
*Watching the Boat*, c.1912,  
by **HELEN MCNICOLL** (1879–1915),  
private collection.



One of the nation’s most prolific artists, Helen McNicoll garnered acclaim for her bright and sunny representations of rural landscapes, child subjects, and modern female figures.

**Student Winner**  
*To My Vanished Childhood* by **MUYING DENG**,  
Grade 9, Regina Christian School, Regina, Saskatchewan.



*Some of Helen McNicoll’s fabulous art pieces demonstrate the simple goodness of childhood—a time when the world seems full of endless possibility.*  
—Muying Deng

**Canadian Art Inspiration**  
*L’enfant au pain* (*Boy with Bread*),  
1892–99, by **OZIAS LEDUC** (1864–  
1955), National Gallery of Canada.



Largely self-taught, Ozias Leduc was one of Quebec’s most important painters.

**Student Winner**  
*Boy with Junk* by **HAEUM PARK**,  
Grade 10, Ernest Manning High School, Calgary, Alberta.



*Ozias Leduc’s Boy with Bread inspired me to make Boy with Junk because I wanted to represent the mindset of teenagers today.*  
—Haeum Park

**Canadian Art Inspiration**  
*The Scream*, 2017,  
by **KENT MONKMAN** (b.1965),  
Denver Art Museum.



*The Scream*, 2017, was included in Kent Monkman’s landmark exhibition, *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*, at the Art Museum of the University of Toronto.

**Student Winner**  
*Ammaakulutché and Ihkulushtia* (diptych) by **AMELIA PICARD**,  
Grade 11, De La Salle Public High School, Ottawa, Ontario.



*As a Métis artist, Kent Monkman’s work inspired me to reflect on the cultural genocide against Indigenous people through my art.*  
—Amelia Picard

**Canadian Art Inspiration**  
*From an Upstairs Window, Winter*,  
c.1950–51, by **LIONEL LEMOINE FITZGERALD** (1890–1956),  
National Gallery of Canada.



Manitoba artist Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald was characterized by art critics as “the man who looks out of the window,” producing many interior/exterior views.

**Student Winner**  
*Spring Break* by **FRANKIE WU**,  
Grade 11, Richmond Secondary School, Richmond, British Columbia.



*I wanted to convey how we are spending less time outside through the occupation of technology and academics.*  
—Frankie Wu



# Supporting Emerging Scholars in Redefining Canadian Art History

The Redefining Canadian Art History Fellowship Program was launched in 2020 as part of the Art Canada Institute’s commitment to making Canadian art history an inclusive, multi-vocal conversation. In its current iteration, the program aims to tell the stories of Canadian art that need to be told and to bring to light the stories of artists whose lives and works have been underrepresented in this country’s art historical narratives.

Through this program, the Art Canada Institute has awarded fellowships of \$30,000 to emerging scholars whose work focuses on an artist or group of artists who have been overlooked in the canons of Canadian art history. We have supported a diverse group of researchers from across the country working on topics that capture the breadth and scope of visual culture in its many facets, from the work of Cree-Métis painter Don Cardinal (1944–1985) to the contributions of Indo-Canadian multimedia artist

Panchal Mansaram (1934–2020) and the pioneering work of Massachusetts-born, Manitoba-based Black photographer William S. Beal (1874–1968). Over the course of the year, fellows are paired with mentors, who are themselves leading scholars in their respective fields, and develop a body of research that they prepare for publication with ACI. Dr. Kristen Hutchinson’s book *Kiss & Tell: Lesbian Art & Activism* will be the first fellowship book to be published from the program, forthcoming in spring 2025.

**SPONSORS OF 2022–2023 FELLOWSHIPS**  
*We gratefully acknowledge:*  
Anonymous  
Grant and Alice Burton  
First Arts  
Janet and Willard L’Heureux  
Nancy McCain and Bill Morneau



**DR. JENNIFER ORPANA** (ABOVE LEFT) is completing her fellowship work on pioneering early twentieth-century photographer Violet Keene Perinchief, developing a body of work that has been facilitated through primary archival research with the Image Centre at Ryerson University.

ABOVE RIGHT: VIOLET KEENE PERINCHEIF, *A Modern Miss*, c.1940.



**TAMARA TOLEDO** (ABOVE LEFT) is continuing her fellowship work on Latin American women artists in Canada, developing a body of primary research on three contemporary women artists based in Montreal, including Claudia Bernal, Maria Ezcurra, and Helena Martin Franco.

ABOVE RIGHT: HELENA MARTIN FRANCO, *Altero(s) filia o los juegos de fuerza de Fritta Caro, Meter el hombro* (detail), 2018.



**DR. KRISTEN HUTCHINSON** (ABOVE LEFT) is publishing *Kiss & Tell: Lesbian Art and Activism*, a full-length monograph based on the research she completed over the course of her ACI fellowship. The title will be part of ACI’s 2024–2025 book season and focuses on the trailblazing Vancouver-based lesbian art collective Kiss & Tell.

ABOVE RIGHT: KISS & TELL, *Drawing the Line* (detail), 1990.



**JENNIFER BOWEN** (ABOVE LEFT) is working on adapting the body of research she completed during her ACI fellowship into a full-length monograph on the Cree-Métis painter Don Cardinal. Entitled *Don Cardinal: Life & Work*, the book will share the untold story of the Hay River, Northwest Territories-based painter’s remarkable life and career.

ABOVE RIGHT: DON CARDINAL, *The Berry Pickers* (detail), 1978.





# 50 Weekly Newsletters

## *A Look at Life through Art*

Our Friday newsletter documents and celebrates the countless connections between the country’s art and the events that define our lives.

Since the newsletter’s launch in the spring of 2020, ACI has published over 150 editions, each one a small exhibition in its own right and an opportunity to share stories and reflections about what is happening in the country when it

comes to Canada and art. In April 2022, we introduced a new component in this program: a monthly round-up of the country’s leading art headlines and stories. It quickly became one of the most-read pieces of ACI content.

ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

JULY 7, 2023

### KANESATAKE RESISTANCE SEVEN ARTISTS WEIGH IN

To mark the 33rd anniversary of the standoff that garnered headlines around the world, we take a close look at Indigenous art made in response to the Kanesatake Resistance, the resulting military response, and the complicated nature of reconciliation.

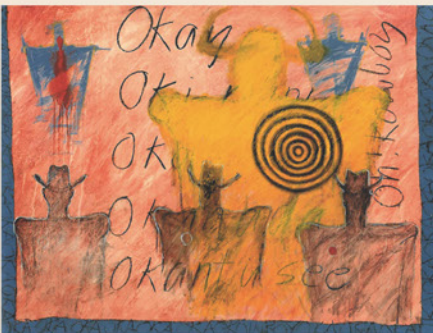


Thirty-three years ago, members of the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Nation near the town of Oka on the north shore of Montreal rose up in protest against municipal plans to expand a golf course into their traditional territories. The conflict, which came to a head on July 11, 1990, and lasted seventy-eight days, was a watershed moment in Canadian history, as the federal and provincial governments deployed thousands of heavily armed police and military units to remove the highway blockades that had been erected. In this newsletter, we're commemorating the Kanesatake Resistance (also known as the Oka Crisis) and reflecting on its lasting legacy by examining works created at the time by Indigenous artists. The wise words of Kwakiutl artist David Neel resonate still: "The barriers between men and between races are erected, not inherent. Clearly it is up to individuals, not governments, to dismantle these barricades and work together to the benefit of all," he writes in [his artist's statement](#).

Sara Angel  
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

### OKA-BOY/OH! KOWBOY

by Gerald McMaster



Gerald McMaster, Oka-boy/Oh! Kowboy, 1990, courtesy of Gerald McMaster.

In *Oka-boy/Oh! Kowboy*, 1990, by Gerald McMaster (b.1953), word games and layered symbols explore the history of policing against Indigenous people. A yellow silhouette with horns, standing in for the outnumbered Mohawk warriors, is marked with a bulls-eye and surrounded by shadowy figures in cowboy hats—a reference to the Western "cowboys and Indians" trope. Meanwhile, in the background, scribbled text is transformed: an innocuous "Oka" becomes "Oka," then "Oka-boy," "O Canada," and eventually, "O kant you see."

[Learn more about Gerald McMaster](#)

### AYUM-EE-AAWACH OOMAMA-MOWAN: SPEAKING TO THEIR MOTHER

by Rebecca Belmore



ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

APRIL 5, 2024

### CLOSE-UP: EDWARD BURTYNSKY'S ICONIC *NICKEL TAILINGS* #34

Edward Burtynsky's most expansive retrospective exhibition to date is now on. To mark the moment, we're taking an in-depth look at his masterpiece *Nickel Tailings* #34, Sudbury, Ontario, 1996.



Edward Burtynsky, *Nickel Tailings* #34, Sudbury, Ontario, 1996, courtesy of Edward Burtynsky.

For decades, Canadian photographer Edward Burtynsky (b.1955) has stunned global audiences with large-format images that trace the devastating environmental impact of industrial activity. Now on view at London's Saatchi Gallery is *BURTYNSKY: Extraction/Abstraction* (until May 6, 2024), the celebrated artist's largest exhibition to date. We're diving into his masterpiece *Nickel Tailings* #34, Sudbury, Ontario, 1996, one of his earliest and most famed photographs in the show. In the image, water takes on the look of lava. Its fluorescent colour comes from nickel tailings, which are waste products of metal extraction and mining. Burtynsky *writes* that his works "search for a dialogue between attraction and repulsion, seduction and fear." *Nickel Tailings* #34 exemplifies this sentiment as well as "how our consumption and our concern for the health of our planet sets us into an uneasy contradiction."

Sara Angel  
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

### AN EPIC VISION

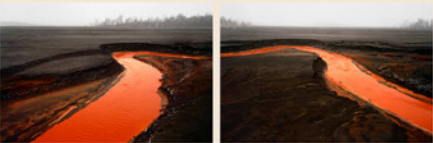


Edward Burtynsky in Belridge, California, 2003, photograph by Noah Weinzweig.

Burtynsky was born in St. Catharines, Ontario, and studied photography at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, now Toronto Metropolitan University. After graduating in 1982, he began creating large-scale photographs, like *Nickel Tailings* #34, that capture the monumental environmental impact of resource extraction and other industries. High-resolution colour photography allows him to achieve an intense degree of detail without sacrificing the broad, sweeping vistas of quarries, refineries, and other sites. His photographs are technically demanding: when an elevated camera perspective is required, Burtynsky uses helicopters and drones to reach the perfect vantage point.

Learn more about Burtynsky in ACI's *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History* by Sarah Bassnett and Sarah Parsons

### BURTYNSKY ON HIS FAMED DIPTYCH



Edward Burtynsky, *Nickel Tailings* #34, Sudbury, Ontario, 1996, courtesy of Edward Burtynsky.

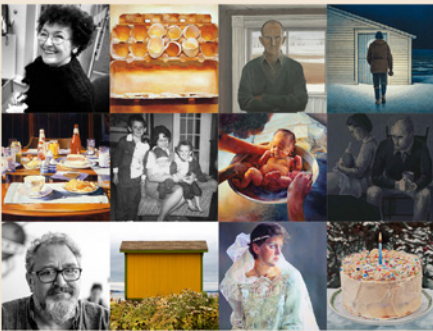
*Nickel Tailings* #34 (above left) is one half of a diptych, or two-panel picture. In his catalogue for the exhibition, Burtynsky writes that it was shot just outside Sudbury, a city famous for its nickel deposits, and where, "The coiled, water-borne waste seen here looks very similar to the molten lava that results from the earlier smelting process when ore is separated from its rock matrix. A hellish picture, it is actually an illusion of scale. We are not looking at a river but a small creek, just over a metre wide that can be easily jumped over. Liquid tailings such as this result from the toxicity that can render the land unusable for other purposes."

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FEBRUARY 16, 2024

### THE PRATT FAMILY A CANADIAN ART DYNASTY

To mark Family Day next Monday, we're looking at the famous Canadian art couple Mary and Christopher Pratt, the tremendously successful careers they each forged, and the legacies they passed on to their children, artists Barbara Pratt and Ned Pratt.



Mary Pratt (1935–2018) and Christopher Pratt (1935–2022), two of Canada's most renowned realist painters, were married for forty-seven years. "The fascination with Christopher lay almost entirely with his mind," *Mary wrote*— "that part of his thinking that concerned images and ideas." In 1961, after finishing their studies at Mount Allison University, where the couple met, they moved with their son John and daughter Anne to St. John's, Newfoundland. There, they had two more children, who would later become artists: painter Barbara Pratt (b.1963) and photographer Ned Pratt (b.1964). This story is a key part of the Art Canada Institute publication *Mary Pratt: Life & Work* by Ray Cronin, where he shares that although Mary's art teacher, Lauren P. Harris, told her, "Now you have to understand in a family of painters, there can only be one painter, and in your family, it's Christopher," she would prove him wrong. With a nod to Family Day next Monday, this week's newsletter dives into the Pratts and their work and shows how domestic scenes, family relationships, gender dynamics, and legacies play out in their art.

Sara Angel  
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

### MARY PRATT



ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

MAY 17, 2024

### THE REMARKABLE STORY OF THE NEWLY FOUND MASTERPIECE: BROOKER'S *FIGURES IN LANDSCAPE*

For forty-eight years, no one knew the whereabouts of *Figures in Landscape*, one of the most controversial paintings in Canadian art. Now it is on view at the McMichael.



Bertram Brooker, *Figures in Landscape*, 1931, private collection.

When art historian Michael Parke-Taylor was organizing the current blockbuster exhibition *Bertram Brooker: When We Awaken* now on at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, he and John Geoghegan, Associate Curator of Collections and Research, set out to find *Figures in Landscape* (above). The painting became one of the most talked-about works in Canada's history after its creator *Bertram Brooker* (1888–1955) submitted it to the 1931 Ontario Society of Artists exhibition, only to have the show's organizers remove it at the very last minute. This became front-page news across the country as reporters sought to uncover the mystery behind the exclusion of the painting. At first Brooker didn't comment. But shortly thereafter, he wrote the now-famous essay entitled "Nudes and Prudes" in which he decried censorship in Toronto—and in the arts in general. After *Figures in Landscape* was exhibited in 1976, it fell off the radar and no one in the art world could locate it. Now, for the first time in decades, the canvas is on view. We talked to Parke-Taylor and Geoghegan about this outstanding work, and why for so long no one could find it.

Sara Angel  
Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

### AN IN-DEMAND PAINTING





# Public Art Talks *and Lectures*

This past year, the Art Canada Institute travelled from coast to coast to hold live events in Vancouver and Halifax. In addition to promoting art through our books and educational resources, ACI introduces our authors and artists to real-world audiences. Over the past decade, we have held art talks across the country at institutions including the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and Calgary’s Esker Foundation.

On March 20, 2024, in partnership with the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG), ACI launched the title *Takao Tanabe: Life & Work*. ACI board member and VAG Chair Emeritus Michael Audain welcomed guests and the 97-year-old iconic artist Takao Tanabe, whom the audience greeted with a standing ovation. The book’s author, Ian Thom, shared the story of Tanabe’s remarkable contribution to art in Canada. On May 8, 2024, ACI was at the Halifax Public Library,

where, in conjunction with the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, we hosted hundreds of guests. The public art event featured a panel on the significance and history of art in Halifax that included Ray Cronin, the author of the newly published *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History*, in conversation with Ann Colville Kitz, daughter of the revered Maritime painter Alex Colville; Mi’kmaw artist Alan Syliboy; and Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Director Sarah Filmore.



TOP LEFT: Michael Audain giving remarks at the Vancouver Art Gallery; TOP RIGHT: Ian Thom, author of *Takao Tanabe: Life & Work*; BOTTOM LEFT: Takao Tanabe with his wife Anona Thorne; BOTTOM RIGHT: Ray Cronin signing copies of his book *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History*.

Panel discussion with Sara Angel, Ray Cronin, Alan Syliboy, Ann Kitz, and Sarah Moore Fillmore.



# *ACI Accounts* Audited Financial Statements 2023–2024 & Thanks to Our Benefactors

With a continued commitment to bringing the country's art to a contemporary audience via twenty-first-century technology, the Art Canada Institute continued to grow in the 2023–2024 fiscal year. We ended the year in a strong financial position, well-positioned to continue to bring Canada and the world never-before-available content that is not only redefining the conversation around Canadian art but establishing ACI as the go-to resource for topics such as the history of photography in Canada.

This year, we were supported by a committed group of almost two hundred benefactors who believe in our work. Despite receiving no public grants, our budget grew to more than \$2.5 million, supporting five distinct pillars of programming. Because we operate without a bricks-and-mortar building, this means that the donations we receive continue to be efficiently directed to our programing and mission: to make Canadian art available for everyone, regardless of their knowledge of the subject or access to a physical museum.

We wish to express our most sincere gratitude to ACI's financial supporters, content creators, and staff, without whom the pursuit of our mission would not be possible.





Statement of Operations for ACIAC  
(Operating as Art Canada Institute)  
Year Ended June 30, 2024

The following is a summary of ACI’s audited  
Statement of Operations.

REVENUE	2024	2023
Donations and sponsorships	2,647,576	2,113,060
Print book sales	67,755	107,771
Interest income	45,129	32,472
Earned and other income	14,995	10,000
	\$2,775,455	\$2,263,303
EXPENSES		
Administrative	778,810	577,115
Canadian Online Art Book Project	429,028	408,896
Print books	222,148	175,641
Homepage editorial content	169,902	108,292
Fellowship program	169,285	214,544
Art education program	140,593	104,534
Fundraising	107,939	111,079
Website maintenance	87,463	117,863
Public art talks	13,994	2,993
Marketing	6,359	2,344
Online exhibitions	3,425	—
Special artist projects	1,850	126,286
New project development	—	6,775
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES BEFORE AMORTIZATION OF INTANGIBLE ASSETS	\$2,130,796	\$1,956,362
	644,659	306,941
Amortization of intangible assets	—	—
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$644,659	\$306,941

Financial Report  
& Message from the Treasurer

In fiscal 2024, thanks to the generous support of ACI’s donors, along with the hard work and commitment of ACI’s staff, we have continued to solidify our position as a leading Canadian cultural institution. We have done so in part by establishing an increasingly strong financial footing year-over-year while delivering on our mission.

The story of the Art Canada Institute continues to be one of carefully managed growth—from an expense management perspective and from a donor growth perspective.

The publication of *Photography in Canada, 1839–1989: An Illustrated History* in fiscal 2024 established ACI as the go-to resource for anyone looking to understand how Canadian artists have used their lenses to change the way we look at our lives and our culture. And while investing in the publication of the digital and print editions of the book is a fantastic proof point for the way in which ACI is changing the country’s cultural landscape for the better, as the pages of this report illustrate, there is much more to celebrate.

We are grateful to our generous donors, more than fifty of whom are new to our family of supporters. In the last year, ACI saw our revenue increase by 23 per cent, marking the eleventh consecutive year of double-digit revenue growth. Thanks to our track record as a positive force for change in the Canadian arts sphere, ACI was able to maintain a loyal base of multi-year and Visionary contributors. These private individuals and organizations continue to be the foundation for the long-term stability and growth of the organization, and on behalf of the ACI Board of Directors, I express my most sincere gratitude to them.

Our expenses in fiscal 2024 grew by 14 per cent, with those investments focusing on three main areas: our best-in-class suite of programming, our technological capabilities, and our people and culture.

ACI also achieved an operating surplus, allowing the organization to increase its working capital reserve to \$1 million and its technology reserve to \$250,000. These reserves will be used to fund new programming streams, make investments in some yet-to-be-announced digital programming enhancements, and to ensure that ACI is well positioned to continue delivering the highest quality digital programming and content.

It is with pride that we share our results on the following pages, illustrating the outcome of disciplined financial management in service of our mission to democratize the country’s visual culture and to make it available to all, regardless of one’s proximity to a bricks-and-mortar museum.

—Steven M. Wilson, September 2024



STEVEN M. WILSON, CPA, CA  
Treasurer, Board of Directors,  
Art Canada Institute





WILLIAM JAMES TOPLEY, page from a Topley Studio Counterbook (studio proof album), 1913, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

Statement of Financial Position for ACIAC  
(Operating as Art Canada Institute)  
As at June 30, 2024

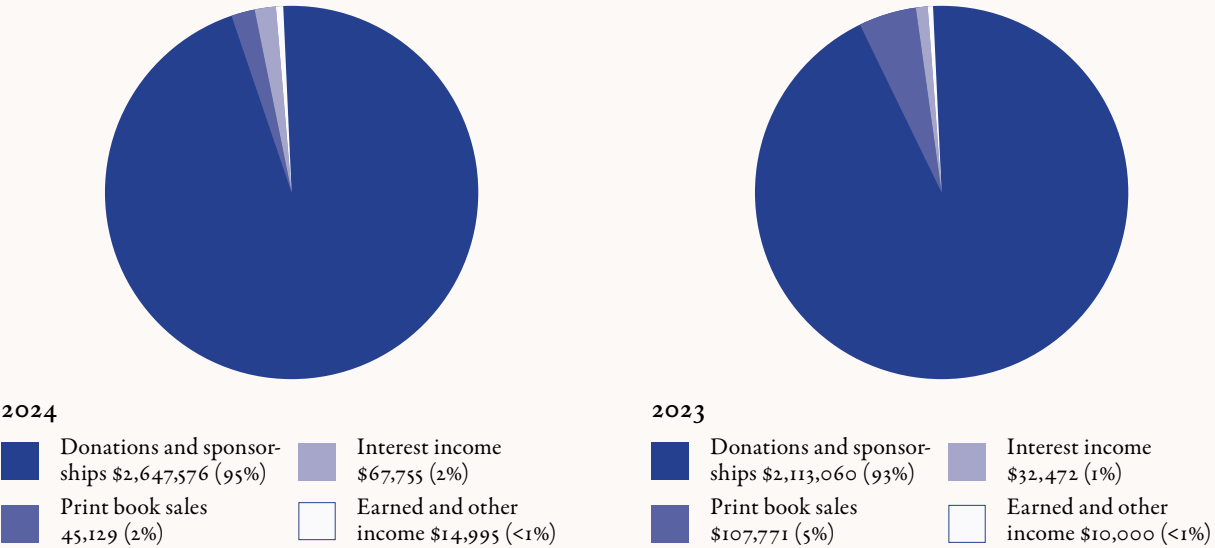
The following is a summary of the Art Canada Institute’s audited Statement of Financial Position.

ASSETS	2024	2023
Current		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,747,935	1,554,534
Accounts receivable	22,281	8,718
Inventory	210,868	201,104
Harmonized Sales Tax recoverable	54,862	54,636
Prepaid expenses and other assets	14,018	6,739
	2,049,964	1,825,731
Intangible Assets	100,500	–
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,150,464	\$1,825,731
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	69,537	139,065
Deferred donations and sponsorships	355,652	606,050
	425,189	745,115
Canada Emergency Business Account Loan	–	–
	425,189	\$745,115
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	475,275	330,616
Internally restricted working capital reserve	1,000,000	650,000
Technology reserve	250,000	100,000
	\$1,725,275	\$1,080,616
TOTAL LIABILITIES + NET ASSETS	\$2,150,464	\$1,825,731

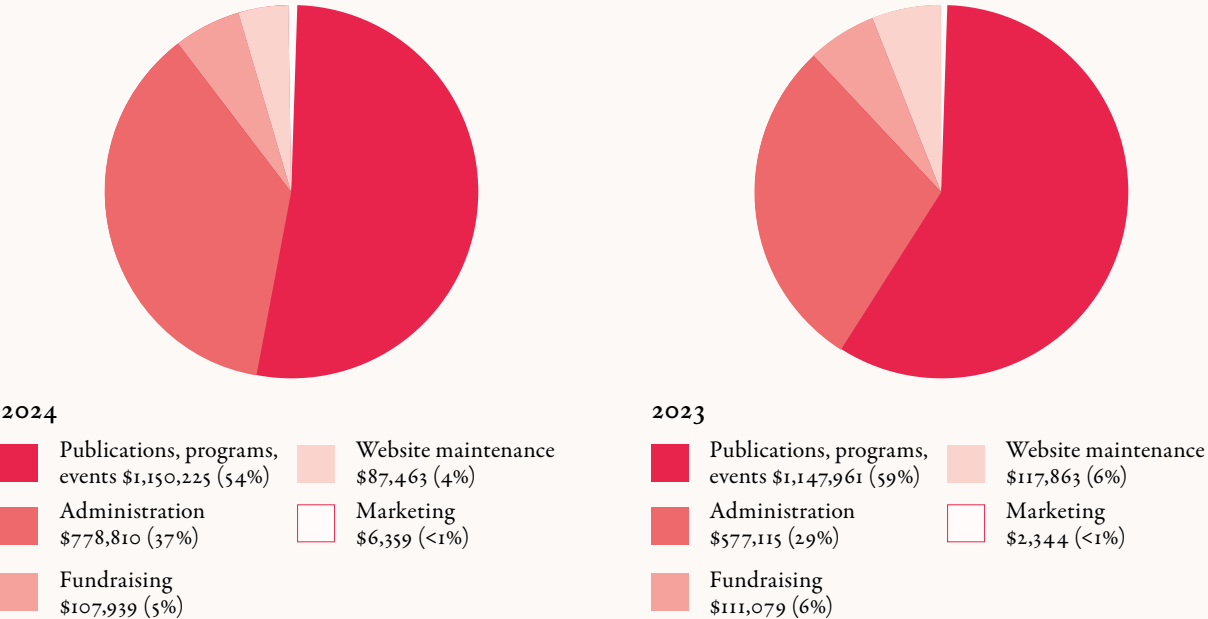


# Revenue & Expenses

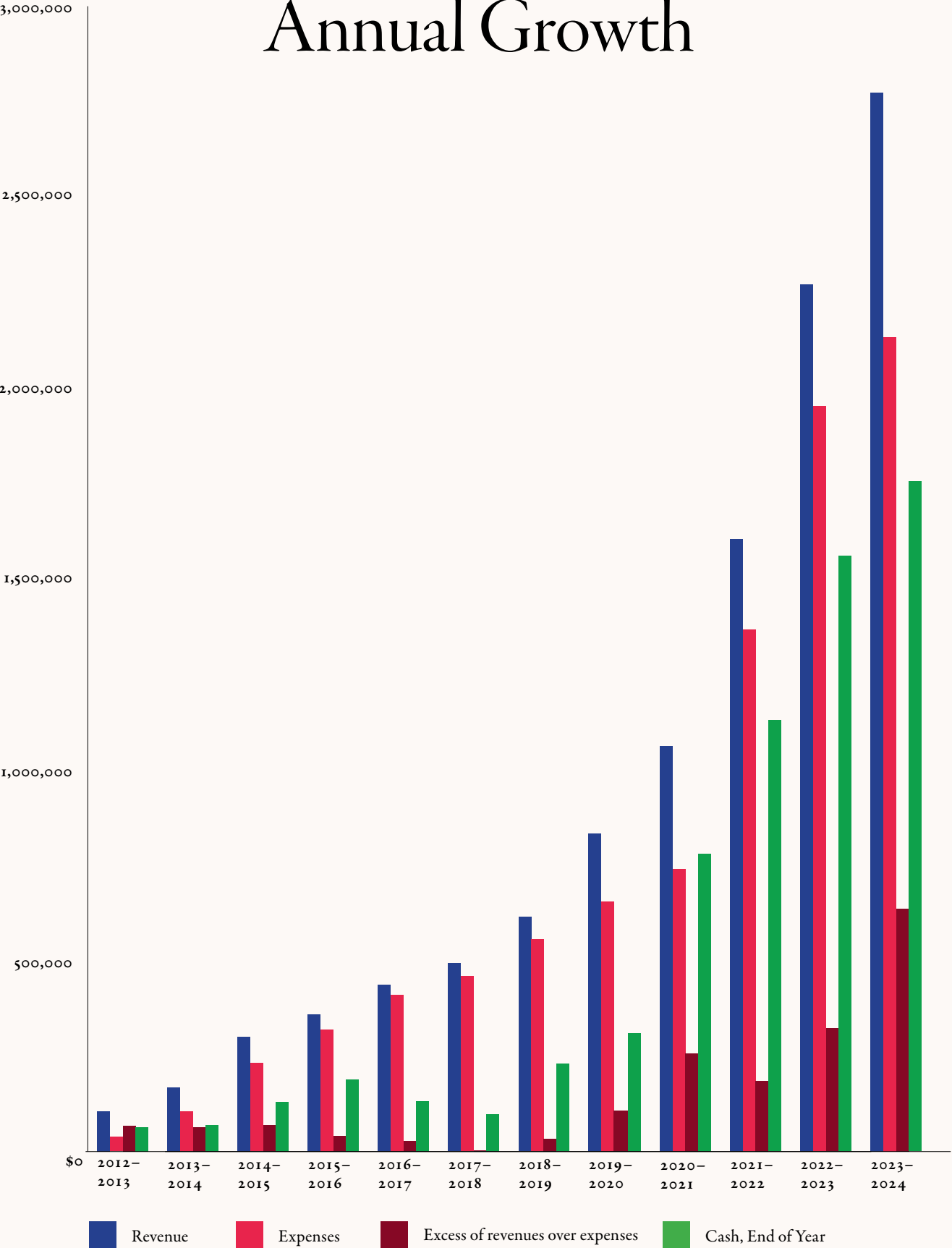
ACI Revenues



ACI Expenses



# Annual Growth





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