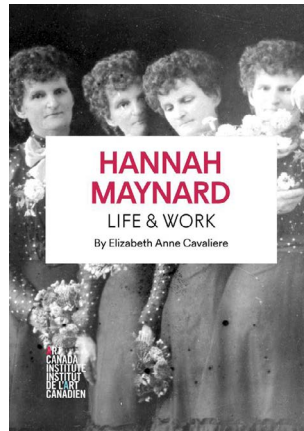


New book on photography pioneer Hannah Maynard traces the trailblazing career of the first woman to own and operate a photography studio in Canada.

From babies and dignitaries to sailors and convicts, the British Columbia–based Hannah Maynard photographed them all, creating a fascinating portrait of an emerging nation.

A selection of press images is available through the link at the end of this release.



LEFT: Hannah Maynard and her grandson, Maynard McDonald, c.1880–97 CENTRE: Cover of *Hannah Maynard: Life & Work*. RIGHT: Portrait of a young woman, n.d.

December 17, 2025, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—***Hannah Maynard: Life & Work***, a free, open-access online art book now available in English and French, celebrates the life and creative output of one of the first professional women photographers in Canada. Hannah Maynard (1834–1918) opened her studio in what was then the raw gold rush town of Victoria, British Columbia, in 1862. For nearly fifty years, she photographed babies, convicts, and sailors, as well as the growing town's elite. Her portraits constitute a compelling visual record of the colonial city, at a time when Canada was coming into being. Upon her retirement, Maynard remarked, “I can say with confidence that we photographed everybody in the town at one time or another.”

Written by Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere, an expert in Canadian art history with a focus on photographic archives, ***Hannah Maynard: Life & Work*** is the first in-depth examination in decades of this remarkable and long-overlooked woman and her work. Says Cavaliere: “Maynard has left us with a body of work that reveals how her photographic practice seeped into almost every facet of her life: her profession; her relationship with her husband, children, and grandchildren; and her own sensibilities about life and death. What emerges when all these aspects are brought into conversation is both a portrait of Canada and a portrait of a truly astounding woman.”

The journey west

Born in 1834 in Bude, England, Hannah Hatherly (later Hatherly Maynard) immigrated with her husband, Richard, to Bowmanville, Ontario (then Canada West), in 1853. While Richard was away seeking their fortune in the 1858 Fraser River Gold Rush in British Columbia, Hannah took up photography. Not long after, drawn by the allure of yet another gold rush in the west, they headed for Victoria.

A commercial and critical success

Maynard's Victoria studio was an immediate commercial success, thanks in part to her ability to work with her subjects, particularly children. When not occupied with commissioned portraits, she devoted herself to experimentation—creating images with unusual effects through multiple exposures, composite printing, and other darkroom processes. A skilled entrepreneur, she used these inventive photographs to showcase her technical mastery and attract new clients. Her annual Gems of British Columbia series—elaborate collages made from the portraits of children she'd photographed in her studio—became a popular promotional tool and a sentimental keepsake.

Outside the studio

Maynard's talents soon led to commissions far beyond the walls of her studio. She was hired by Harvard University's Peabody Museum, for example, to produce portraits of Indigenous people in British Columbia and document aspects of their environments—images that reveal both her technical precision and the complex dynamics of ethnographic photography in the late nineteenth century.

For many years, she also served as the official photographer for Victoria's police force, creating mug shots of individuals charged with crimes. Even in these utilitarian images, her eye for nuance is unmistakable: the photographs display the same clarity, sensitivity, and attention to character that defined her studio portraits.

Rediscovered

Largely forgotten after her death in 1918, Hannah Maynard's compelling archive resurfaced in the 1980s, sparked by a broader shift in how photography was understood and valued. As museums and scholars in Canada and abroad increasingly recognized photography as a serious art form, Maynard's inventive studio practice, technical experimentation, and diverse clientele attracted new attention. At the same time, feminist art historians—working to recover and highlight the contributions of women artists—identified her as a figure whose originality had long been overlooked.

Today, Maynard stands as a pioneering woman artist and an innovator who pushed photography into unexplored territory. "Maynard's reputation," says Sara Angel, Executive Director of the Art Canada Institute, "will continue to grow as *Hannah Maynard: Life & Work* makes her story available to even more Canadians."

Hannah Maynard: Life & Work advances ACI's mission to create a central digital resource to share Canada's most important artists, and works of art, with the world. To date, ACI has published more than seventy expert-authored digital books that are available free of charge. As well, the Art Canada Institute develops Canada's only comprehensive art education guides for teachers and students from kindergarten to grade 12—content that is also free and available online and serves over 700,000 educators.

To explore the Art Canada Institute's open-access digital book *Hannah Maynard: Life & Work* by **Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere**, please visit: <https://www.aci-iac.ca/art-books/hannah-maynard/>.

For **media requests** or for **interviews** with:

- **Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere**, author of *Hannah Maynard: Life & Work*
- **Sara Angel**, Executive Director, **Art Canada Institute**

please contact: media@aci-iac.ca

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About Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere

Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere teaches and researches Canadian art histories with a focus on photographic archives and institutional narratives. Her writing has been published in *Environmental History*, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, *Histoire sociale / Social History*, *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies*, *RACAR: Revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review*, and the *Journal of Canadian Art History*. She is also a co-author of *CanadARTHstories*, a collaborative and iterative reimagining of the way the discipline is taught. Cavaliere received her PhD from Concordia University in 2016. She was a Jarislowsky Foundation Post-Doctoral Fellow at Concordia's Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art in 2017 and an SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellow at Queen's University until 2021. She is a settler Canadian and granddaughter of Italian immigrants, residing in Toronto/Tkaronto.

About the Art Canada Institute

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, on a digital platform, and free of charge in both English and French, across Canada and internationally. To accomplish this, ACI works with Canada's leading cultural institutions, art historians, curators, and visual culture experts, and is dedicated to the creation of authoritative original content on the people, themes, and topics that have defined Canadian art history.

To learn more about ACI and to access our free digital library, please visit us! aci-iac.ca

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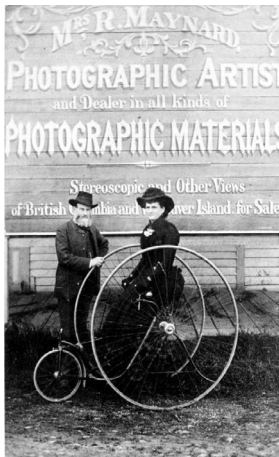
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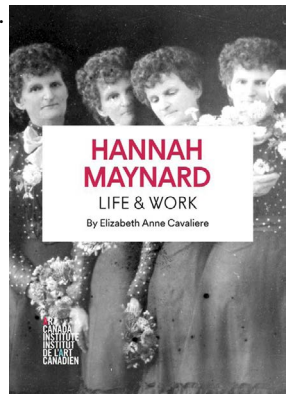
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IMAGES

Download image files [here](#).

IMAGE CREDITS

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1. Hannah Maynard, *Studio portrait of three boys in sailor suits*, c.1895, glass plate negative, 21.5 x 17 cm. Maynard Family Collection, BC Archives (MS-3384, F-05099). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
2. Hannah Maynard, *Ah Foo, Charles Frederic Newcombe's cook*, 1885, hand-tinted cabinet card, 21.3 x 13 cm. Archives Visual Records Collection, BC Archives (F-05112). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
3. Hannah Maynard, *Gems of British Columbia for the Year 1890, "Sprays from the Gem Fountain,"* 1890, gelatin dry glass plate negative, 21.5 x 16.5 cm. Maynard Family Collection, BC Archives (MS-3380, J-04554). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
4. Hannah Maynard, *Hannah Maynard and her grandson, Maynard McDonald*, c.1880–97, glass plate negative, 20 x 25 cm. Maynard Family Collection, BC Archives (MS-3380, J-04565). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
5. Hannah Maynard, *Portrait from life; bust of a young girl*, n.d., from Mrs. R. Maynard's Photographic Gallery album. Maynard Family Collection, BC Archives (MS-3361, F-05955). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
6. Hannah Maynard, *Hannah Maynard multiple exposure self-portrait*, c.1880–99, gelatin dry glass plate negative, 12.5 x 18 cm. Maynard Family Collection, BC Archives (MS-3380, J-04571). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
7. Hannah Maynard, *Belle Adams, charged with the murder of Charles Kincaid; received five years for manslaughter*, 1898, lantern slide, 8.2 x 8 cm. Archives Visual Records Collection, BC Archives (F-06721). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
8. Hannah Maynard, *Maynard McDonald and his grandmother, Hannah Maynard, cycling in Beacon Hill Park, Victoria*, c.1895, albumen print, 11.5 x 17.2 cm. Archives Visual Records Collection, BC Archives (F-05047). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
9. Richard and Hannah Maynard outside of Mrs. Maynard's studio, c.1880, photographer unknown. Archives Visual Records Collection, BC Archives (C-08673). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
10. Hannah Maynard, *Mrs. Maynard*, n.d., glass plate negative, 43 x 36 cm. Maynard Family Collection, BC Archives (MS-3384, J-02999). Courtesy of the Royal BC Museum.
11. Hannah Maynard, *Portrait of a young woman*, n.d., reproduced in *The Magic Box: The Eccentric Genius of Hannah Maynard*, by Claire Weissman Wilks (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1980).
12. Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere, author of *Hannah Maynard: Life & Work*.
13. Cover of *Hannah Maynard: Life & Work* by Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere.