

INTRODUCTION

1.1 What do you think art history is? What are its subjects? What methods or practices does it involve? Can you think of any challenges that might be particular to studying the history of art in Canada?

1.2 Consider Belshaw's questions at the end of this excerpt and try to answer them for yourself: "So whose Canada do we study? The Canada of the French? Of the Naskapi? Of the Basque whalers with their toeholds on the east coast? Of the Nuu-chah-nulth or the Acadians? When was Canada? Are there themes we can draw across generations and centuries? Are there successions of transitions as tumultuous and irreversible as rapids on a river? Who gets to tell those stories and whose voices are likely to remain silent?"

1.3 Do you consider yourself Canadian? Why or why not? You may not feel that you identify as Canadian if you are Indigenous or new to Canada, for example. Reflect on your identity. This course addresses issues of gender, race, class, ethnicity, and other intersecting aspects of identities. Consider how your own identity may influence your views of Canadian art or art in Canada.

1.4 What questions do you have about the course? Spend some time reflecting on your goals for this course. What do you want to accomplish? What do you need to do to achieve your goals? How can your instructor help? Have you taken a course like this before? If so, what can you do to prepare? If not, what are your concerns?

1.5 Research the land you currently occupy. Write a land acknowledgement reflecting your relationship to the land.

1.6 Go back and undertake a close reading of this excerpt from Marc Mayer's essay. What are some of the key ideas and arguments that Mayer is making here? What ideas or aspects were unfamiliar to you or did you not understand? What questions do you have about this text? At the end of this course, it may be useful to come back to these questions and reflect upon your response to this essay: has your understanding of it changed?

1.7 Take a close look at the table of contents from two texts often considered "foundational" to the history of art in Canada:

Dennis Reid. *A Concise History of Canadian Painting*. Second edition (first published in 1973). Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988.

J. Russell Harper. *Painting in Canada: A History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966.

Respond in point form to the following questions:

Who is writing the text (a single author, many authors)?

When is the text written and what was happening in Canada when the text was produced?

How is the information organized (chronologically, alphabetically, geographically, by medium, by style, by gender)?

Now that you've thought about what is included, think about what is excluded. Are there particular forms of art, places, or people that are not mentioned?

Lastly, start thinking about what your answers to the above questions reveal to you about the history of Canadian art history (historiography). Are there biases within the study of art history? Are there problems with continuing to use these texts as the core textbook of a Canadian art history course? What might you suggest could be more useful course readings.

1.8 1. Select one artwork from the list below. Search for a full colour reproduction available online.

- Ozias Leduc, [*Still Life with Lay Figure \(1898\)*](#)
- Annie Pootoogook, [*Cape Dorset Freezer \(2005\)*](#)
- Prudence Heward, [*Rollande \(1929\)*](#)
- Bertram Brooker, [*Sounds Assembling \(1928\)*](#)
- Liz Magor, [*Chee-to \(2000\)*](#)
- Rita Letendre, [*Atara \(1963\)*](#)
- William Berczy, [*The Woolsey Family \(1809\)*](#)
- Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, [*The Impending Nisga'a' Deal. Last Stand. Chump Change \(1996\)*](#)
- Dana Claxton, [*Headdress-Jeneen \(2018\)*](#)
- Suzy Lake, [*Suzy Lake as Gilles Gheerbrandt \(1974\)*](#)

2 Set a timer and spend 10 minutes looking closely at the image.

3 Make a rough sketch of the artwork. This forces you to look closely and help you understand the visual logic, various components, and content of the image.

4 Formally analyze the work. Make note of what you see, when you ask:

- What are the defining features of the compositional design?
- What is the arrangement of colour, line, shape, and texture?
- What is the artist's chosen media (oil paint, stone, sound, bronze, fabric, etc.?)
- What is the content of the image? Is it figurative? Abstract? What is being depicted?

- 5 Consider other information easily available. Who is the artist? What is the title of the artwork? Was it given by the artist? Or a museum at a later date? What is the date of the work? Do you know any other artists or artworks from that periods you can connect it to? Does it remind you of any other artworks you have seen, from any time period?
- 6 Reflect on your response. Does the work incite an emotion? Does the image remind you of something, or jog a memory?
- 7 Are you able to interpret and make an argument about the artwork based on everything you have observed and considered so far? Your interpretation of the artwork should be based on an appreciation of the combined forces of form, style, and subject matter/content, together with a consideration of when the work was made. How do you make meaning from this image or object?
- 8 Summarize your response in 500 words.

KNOWING

2.1 Go outside, on your street or in your backyard if you have one, or even look around your own home. How many plants can you name? If you don't really recognize many or any plants, consider what this tells you about your relationship to the natural world and your environment. Think about how you have or might obtain knowledge about a particular plant: By asking someone? Who? By looking in a book or online? Which one? By looking at what surrounds the plant? By describing it or drawing it? Take a moment to go through and write down your own knowledge process in learning about something from the environment and ecology in which you are interconnected.

2.2 What are Cartier's and Champlain's maps trying to describe and represent? Consider the visual tools they use: scale (are things the size they are supposed to be, and how large are they in relation to one another?); perspective (from above, from eye level); symbols (indicators of direction or cues that indicate a particular feature); details, designs, labels. How is it different from a map that you might use today? How is it the same? What do your observations this tell you about map-making in this particular historical moment and context?

2.3 *La France Apportant la foi aux Hurons de la Nouvelle-France* tells the story of an exchange of knowledge but is also a form of knowledge-keeping of this historical event. Let's read it for ourselves by matching the letters on the artwork with the numbered descriptions below of what is happening. This process of understanding an artwork through its visual elements is called visual analysis.

2.4 The *Codex* exists in the collection of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art in Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States. The Gilcrease

Institute has [digitized the document](#). Spend some time moving through the pages. What plants and animals do you recognize? Would you say the Codex is a work of art? A document? Or both?

2.5 Imagine you are an art gallery curator. If you were curating an exhibition of Indigenous art and/or visual culture, what steps would you take to ensure that it represents the art or visual culture ethically and respectfully? Outline some of the things that you would have to consider in the process of putting the exhibition together.

2.6 Consider your reaction to some of the elements in the installation, what do you make of the use of black paint, the ropes binding the chairs together, and the bright red apples screwed down into the chairs? "[Apple](#)" is a derogatory term used by First Nations toward other First Nations; it implies that one is "red on the outside, but white on the inside." The work is also interactive, as Westra notes. Viewers can add their own experiences, thoughts, or memories to the blackboard with chalk that is left out for everyone. What would you write on the blackboard walls in *The Lesson*?

2.7 Write down some of your reactions to both *Clouds of Autumn* and *Picking Up the Pieces*. Choose one of the films and respond to the following:

1. For *Clouds of Autumn*, what is the narrative as far as you understand the film? What really struck you about the film? What visual details resonated? What sounds? How does sound reinforce the relationship of the children to the land?
2. For *Picking Up the Pieces*, what does it mean to be a witness? What is the significance of a blanket? Do some research on your own about the importance of blankets in many First Nations cultures. Describe your reaction to the artwork and documentary.

2.8 Read Leah Sandals' conversation with Jonathan Dewar in *Canadian Art* magazine, "[Art, Residential Schools & Reconciliation: Important Questions](#)." What is the purpose of art in the reconciliation process—or what has been called the reconciliation process? What are some of the problems with the government process of reconciliation? What are some of the considerations around exhibiting artworks about residential schools? Stimson sees his work as a form of activism. Consider the ways that *Sick and Tired*, *The Lesson*, and *Clouds of Autumn* support this idea of art as activism.

2.9 Look at the two artworks above by Inuit artists Annie Pootoogook and David Ruben Piqtoukun. To which principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit do you think they connect? Explain how they connect to these principals, paying attention to visual and material details. How are the principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

similar to ways you have come to know and understand things in your own experience? Are any of these principles new to you? In what ways might they enrich your own ways of knowing in the future, particularly when it comes to the intersections of visual artworks and histories?

ENCOUNTER

3.1 Find an object in your house. Write three or four sentences about how it is the manifestation of encounter. Consider how it reflects a hybridization or conjuncture between cultures or cultural practices.

3.2 Consider different perspectives on the idea of encounter. In what ways do you encounter other cultures in your life? Are there examples from your experience in which you have noticed disparate cultures “meet[ing], clash[ing], and grapp[ing] with each other”?

3.3 The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) has many bandolier bags in its collection. [Search the ROM's collection here to find a bag](#). Based on what you have learned from the previous essay and video, describe the form, content, and possible context of your selected bag.

3.4 Compare and contrast the watercolour and oil versions of Kee-akee-ka-saa-ka-wow. Consider what the sitter is wearing. What do the clothes tell you about the sitter? How much European influence do you see? What in the sketch leads you to this conclusion? What has changed from the original field sketch to the final oil painting? Why do you think Kane made the changes he did?

3.5 Define “salvage paradigm” in your own words. Can you think of other examples where this theory can be applied?

3.6 Look closely at the portrait of Thayendanagea. Although Brandt employs neo-classical European portrait traditions, many indicators of the sitter’s Indigenous identity are also included. How can you understand this work in relation to some of the hybrid objects we considered earlier in the module?

3.7 Look closely at *Trading: Smallpox* by artist Ruth Cuthand and write a formal visual analysis of the artwork. Consider the materials used in conjunction with the subject matter. How might you begin to interpret this artwork? Refer back to the Slow Looking/Close Looking section in the Introduction module to review the steps.

3.8 How does *Historica Canada* depict Carr’s encounter with Indigenous culture?

LAND/SCAPE

4.1 Land becomes landscape as we experience, mediate, and develop our own and cultural understandings of it. *Danse dans la neige* is a physical expression of this process by which the artist uses her body to feel and understand place. Experiencing land—be it a busy city block, a quiet courtyard, or a forested mountain peak—is something that unites the spatial and the sensorial. Go outside. Listen. Feel. Smell. Move. How are you experiencing the space around you through your senses? How does your movement impact your sensation of and relationship to the space around you?

4.2 How does the video talk about, characterize, and describe the land? The narrator suggests that A.Y. Jackson has engaged in a “lifelong search into the meaning of the Canadian landscape.” How does the video present Jackson’s process as an artist and how does this process shape your understandings of his paintings as they present the land? When we think about the ideas presented by John O’Brian in his analysis of Jackson’s *Terre Sauvage*, how might the film reinforce settler narratives of the land while minimizing other narratives?

4.3 Describe the photograph. What do you see? How is it arranged? What is in the background? How are the people dressed? Think about what these details might reveal to you about the land. How might the government use this photograph to visually entice European immigrants to come to Canada in the early 20th century and to record successful immigration programs and policies?

4.4 Have a look at Watson’s artworks found on [the website for the Homer Watson House](#) in Kitchener, Ontario. Watson and his sister transformed this house into a small art gallery. Select an example of Watson’s work from the website and consider Keri Cronin’s idea of labour in the colonial process of settlement. Who or what is performing labour? What kinds of labour are taking place—agricultural, industrial, domestic? How is that labour presented visually? In a calm or serene way? In a harsh way? How does the land look? Welcoming? Hostile? What might Watson be presenting or communicating about rural Canadian land?

4.5 After reading the previous excerpt from Sarah E.K. Smith and Carla Taunton’s essay “Unsettling Canadian Heritage: Decolonial Aesthetics in Canadian Video and Performance Art,” consider how *Mobilize* counters stereotypical representations of Indigenous peoples in Canada and addresses the centrality of land to Indigenous identity and colonialism. How does *Mobilize* make a case for cultural continuity between historic and contemporary Indigenous practices? What and whose perspectives are

privileged? How is the film an example of self-determined Indigenous representation? What is the role of land and landscape in the film?

4.6 Think about how W.J.T. Mitchell emphasizes that we should focus not on “what landscape ‘is’ or ‘means’ but what it does, how it works as a cultural practice. Landscape, we suggest, doesn’t merely signify or symbolize power relations; it is an instrument of cultural power, perhaps even an agent of power that is.” Take a close and lingering look at *Sunrise on the Saguenay*. Describe it formally: How would you describe it to someone who could not see it? Is it realistic? Detailed? Abstract? Ask yourself how these formal qualities make you feel: Calm? Moved? In awe? What is in the painting and from whose perspective: What kind of boats? For what might sunrise be a metaphor? Who is telling the story and what story are they telling? Think about how the formal description that you’ve provided influences the work as “an instrument of cultural power.” It is aesthetically alluring, yes, but does it tell you something about the colonial context in which it was painted? And what about its place in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada?

4.7 In this section we have looked at the ways that artists transform or explore the transformation of land into landscape through distinct visual approaches that often reflect an idea, attitude, or outlook about the land. Each artist from Lucius O’Brien to Isabelle Hayeur has aestheticized the landscape, showing viewers the power and allure of the land around us. Get creative by going outside and photographing, sketching, painting, or sculpting the land that you see—a park, your balcony or backyard, the street, urban or remote spaces. Think about the decisions you are making in representing that land visually: are there people and animals? Are there elements of the built environment? What colours are you using? What is included and excluded? In a short paragraph, write down what those formal decisions might signal to you about your own understanding and relationship to the land, and how you think viewers might react to your artwork.

4.8 Explore Edward Burtynsky’s artworks included in the online exhibition *Footing the Bill* by Art for Change [here](#). Pick one of the “ACT” engagement activities on the website, and in 150-200 words describe whether or not Burtynsky’s artwork prompted you to want to take action, and reflect on the environmental issue and activity that the ACT button asked you to do. Consider your own reaction to Edward Burtynsky’s presentation of landscapes devastated by industry, global consumerism, and electronic waste. Do you find them captivating images? Would you have reacted differently if the images were more ruined and less visually seductive? How can we reconcile our desire for modern conveniences of mass-produced goods with our concern for environmental destruction? What can images do to help us understand the

current debates that are circulating about the brand-new epoch we have brought about?

[4.9 Listen to “Where is the Land in Landscape?” Episode 12 of art historian Linda Steer’s podcast Unboxing the Canon](#) (25 min, 39 sec). Steer’s podcast reflects many of the tensions between beauty and power in landscape that we have encountered in this module. It also situates differences between Eurocentric and Indigenous understandings of the land. For example, Steer discusses the idea that European landscapes can be seen as invitational, in which the viewer can enter the work and are an extension of colonial processes. This idea contrasts with some Indigenous-made landscapes that can be seen as anti-invitational in the ways that they deploy strategies to block a viewer’s entry into the work and to resist colonial processes. Bonnie Devine’s work resists colonial processes in her understanding of the land as holding memories of human and environmental stories—for example, the way the land scars from climate events. The land remembers and the land listens. Steer ends the podcast thinking about Anishinaabe artist Rebecca Belmore’s artwork *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan: Speaking to Their Mother* (1991), a large wooden megaphone used to speak to the earth. Steer imagines what she would say if she could walk up to the megaphone and speak through it, addressing the earth. Write down what you would say if you had the chance to stand in front of *Speaking to Their Mother*.

PORTRAITURE

5.1 Take a moment to note the portraits you have seen today. Whom do they depict? Where are they? Consider whether these portraits were produced for particular purposes or placed in significant locations. How do you think they are intended to be viewed? What power dynamics are evident when you think about these portraits in this way?

5.2 Watch “What is the difference between a selfie and a self-portrait?” Then, choose a recent photo that you consider to be a good representation of yourself (this image doesn’t need to contain a person) and write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) describing why you think this is the case. Make sure to draw upon specific visual details in your answer. Would you categorize this image as a self-portrait or a selfie? Why?

5.3 Consider the two advertisements below.

What visual and material details can you glean from these texts? How do these details compare to what is typically represented in portraits during this period? Why do you think the descriptions are so detailed? Why might reading

alternative sources against the grain be significant for the study of art history in Canada?

Portraits of specific enslaved individuals from the 18th and 19th centuries are rare. As a result, scholars have looked to other media for alternative visual depictions of enslaved people. [Charmaine Nelson](#), for instance, has proposed that reading runaway slave advertisements “against the grain” allows them to function as a kind of visual representation. When reading against the grain, researchers attempt to move beyond the dominant reading of a text—or the most commonly accepted interpretation—to discover alternative, even resistant readings. In the North American context, this often means looking at the work from a less privileged perspective—in a way that disrupts an assumed white, male, middle-class, heterosexual, or able-bodied point of view. Because those who lack privilege—whether by virtue of their gender, race, or class—have frequently been overlooked or left out of dominant narratives, reading against the grain presents a means to address the gaps—and sometimes fill the silences—in Canadian history.

5.4 Consider Heward’s *Hester* in relation to *At the Theatre*. How are women depicted in each of these images? Where are they and what are they doing? Who do you think was the intended audience for each of these works? What do these images suggest about women’s status within Canada at the beginning of the 20th century?

5.5 Consider the image of Mrs. Wing Sing and her son, as well as that of the men in front of C.D. Hoy’s store in relation to this image from a Chinese immigration certificate. What kind of portraits are these? If, as Susan Sontag suggests, photography implies an act of appropriation, how do these photographs articulate individual identity, and for what purpose?

5.6 Watch author Tracy Chevalier’s TED Talk, “[Finding the Story Inside the Painting](#),” and then choose one of the portraits featured in the OER or on the [Art Canada Institute](#) website and write a micro-fiction (max. 500 words) about the individual depicted in the work. Your story should be creative but should also be rooted in the material and visual properties you observe in the image itself. Try starting this exercise with a session of close looking, making note of the details that interest or intrigue you. This is not a research assignment, but you may draw upon the information you find in the OER or on the ACI website.

BELONGING

6.1 In the article “[A little girl in Toronto lost to history – and now found](#),” reporter Chris Bateman tracks down the identity of the once-anonymous subject of one

of Goss's most famous photographs of the Ward by searching for clues in the photograph itself and in the City of Toronto archives.

Read Bateman's article and then look closely at *Slum Exterior*. What evidence in the photo might help you learn more about its subjects? What signs of community and belonging do you see?

6.2 Carefully read the text of the 1911 Anti Creek-Negro (Muscogee) cover letter and petition addressed to Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier. What does this text reveal about the authors' and signatories' ideas about belonging in Canada?

6.3 Without using a dictionary or other sources, define "belonging" and "community." What do these terms mean to you? How do you experience belonging and community in your life? What roles do country and national identity play in your understanding of these terms? Did learning about the Ward and the *1911 Anti Creek-Negro (Muscogee) Petition* challenge, change, or expand your understanding of these terms?

6.4 Visit www.treatycard.ca, complete L'Hirondelle's mock treaty card registration form. What information would you include to represent yourself? Why? Do you think this is an accurate representation of you? Is there anything about yourself that you think is important but were not able to include on the form?

6.5 Choose three photos or images that represent historical, personal, and contemporary aspects of your identity. Why did you choose these photos? What do you think they might reveal about you, your life, and history to someone who doesn't know you?

6.6 Take a photo of yourself at a site that represents the city, town, or neighbourhood where you currently live. Why did you choose this site? How does it represent the place you live? What is your relationship to this site and place?

6.7 Vera Frenkel describes ...*from the Transit Bar* as "a place where uncertainty is a form of home." Reflecting on what you now know about this work, what do you think she means by this description? How does uncertainty relate (or not) to your own understanding of home?

6.8 Explore the [Black Strathcona Project website](#). Listen to the stories of ten other inhabitants of Hogan's Alley. Based on what you learned about their experiences, how would you describe this community?

6.9 Download Stan Douglas's [Circa 1948 app](#) and explore the streets of Hogan's Alley. How does it feel to be "in" the neighbourhood? How would you describe

your relationship to Hogan's Alley as a user of Douglas's app?

6.10 Compare and contrast *Circa 1948* and *Every Building on 100 West Hastings Street*. What strategies does Douglas use to evoke ideas of community and belonging without explicitly depicting people? Why do you think he does this?

6.11 Revisit your answer to Learning Journal 6.3. Has your understanding of the concepts of belonging and community changed after completing this module? How would you define these terms and your relationship to them now? Are there one or two artworks in particular that impacted your thinking? How and why?

ABROAD

7.1 If you could share one work of Canadian art with someone abroad, what work would it be? Why? Select an artwork and write 3 to 4 sentences about what themes and ideas it might convey about Canada.

7.2 Think of a time you traveled. Where did you go? Why were you there? What did you learn? Did it change your perspective?

7.3 Find the website for the upcoming Venice Biennale. When is the next edition? What is the curatorial approach to the event? What types of works and artistic approaches are being emphasized? Has the Canadian representative been announced?

7.4 Select one of the artists from the list above. Find out what you can about their contribution to the Venice Biennale. Why do you think they were selected? What works were shown?

7.5 Go to [Isuma TV online](#) and explore the platform. Take note of the different ways you can explore the videos on this website. Identify a video you are interested in and watch it. Please answer the following questions about the video once you have viewed it:

- How did you make your video selection? For example, did you search by topic or select a recommended video?
- Describe the video work you watched. Is there a narrative? What happens?
- Think about the aesthetic strategies employed in creating the video. What formal choices did the creators make? For instance, you might describe the types of shots used, the lighting and colour, etc.

7.6 Imagine you are invited to program the Canada Pavilion at the next Venice Biennale. What contemporary artist (or artists) would you choose to exhibit?

Consider the field of Canadian contemporary art, the history of Canadian programming at the Venice Biennale (both in the pavilion and off site), and also the audiences—curators, artists, museum workers, collectors, donors, diplomats, students, tourists, the general public, and many others—who will see your exhibition.

- Explain your choice of artist with reference to their practice, career stage, and suitability for this opportunity.
- Discuss two works by the artist you would like to include in the pavilion. Be sure to provide a visual analysis of the works! Include at least two figures in your assignment.
- Justify your choices for the pavilion in relation to the context of Canadian representation at the biennale.

Discuss how the work of the artist (or artists) you select will connect with diverse international audiences. What messages do you hope to convey, and why?

7.7 What artists were mentioned in “Canadian artists at Expo 67”? Reflect critically on what work in this period was seen as significant to national representation: Which artists were shown? What type of work?

INSTITUTIONS

8.1. Have you been to a museum recently? Did you ever wonder how the objects got there? Or have you ever recognized something from your own culture in a museum? Were you surprised by how your culture was presented? Can you think of a time when you were surprised by how a culture different from your own was represented in a museum?

8.2 Think about a museum in your region, or one you have visited previously—does this institution fit the model explained in the video? Does it raise any of the same questions or concerns seen in the video?

8.3 Watch the [creative documentary](#) *A Museum in the City* (52 minutes) by Luc Bourdon (2011) and consider the MMFA in relation to Carol Duncan’s arguments about the museum as ritual. What are the rituals of the museum? Who participates in these rituals? Who does not? How does the ritual of the museum entrench certain narratives? And what are these narratives?

8.4 Explore some of the artworks depicted in [Shirley Madill’s essay on Miss Chief](#) to see the different ways that Kent Monkman utilizes his alter ego in his artistic practice. For example, look at: *Being Legendary* (2018); *Portrait of the Artist as Hunter* (2002); *The Triumph of Mischief* (2007); and *Woe to Those Who Remember from Whence They Came* (2008).

Select a work by Monkman and think about how it functions. In 5 to 10 sentences, describe and explain the medium, what is represented, how Miss Chief is used by the artist, and what message the work conveys to viewers.

8.5 For more on the ROM, [watch this video on the history of the institution](#) (7 minutes). Consider how it is similar to the MMFA. How is it different? What are the controversies the video raises? Answer some of the questions posed. Should objects acquired in non-consensual ways be given back to the communities they were taken from?

8.6 Read [What Is a Museum? A Dispute Erupts Over a New Definition](#). Can you write your own definition of a museum? Write a paragraph or two describing what a museum is to you.

8.7 Have you ever heard the term “parallel gallery”? What about “artist-run centre”? Think about your local art scene: what artist-run centres exist in your region? You can find a [directory of all the ARCs in Canada here](#). Find an ARC in your area and learn more by visiting in person or checking out their website. During your visit identify the following: 1) When was the centre established? 2) Does it have a particular focus or mandate? 3) And most importantly, what artwork is currently on display?

COLLECTIVITY

9.1 As the Pagnirtung Tapestry Studio weaving *Achieving a Dream* reveals, working collaboratively can yield some truly spectacular results. This module seeks to reframe some of the more celebrated Canadian artworks by thinking about what might be gained when artists work together and to examine where, when, and why artists have formed organizations, collective and collaborations. In a few sentences, consider why you think artists might choose to work together or form artistic organizations. What benefits might come from such alliances?

9.2 Compare John A Fraser's *A Shot in the Dawn* (1873), A.C. Leighton's *Mount Skoki* (1935) and J. E. H. MacDonald's *Goat Range, Rocky Mountains* (1932). What subject does each present? What geographical location? How does each artist represent the place depicted through composition, colour, and detail?

9.3 What roots and origins do museums and galleries have in your region? Visit the website of a public museum or gallery in your area and have a look at the “About” section. When was it established? By whom? What community(ies) did it serve then, and who does it serve now?

9.4 Research one of the artists from the Beaver Hall Group or Canadian Group of Painters. Research one of their artworks, and write a paragraph or two (200-500 words) visually describing and analyzing it.

9.5 What is happening in the photostory above? Think about how the images work together visually (are some bigger, are some higher on the page than others, what narrative does this create)? Who put this story together? Who is photographed and how? Who is its intended audience? How is text used to support the images? If the NFB's mandate is to show Canada to Canadians, what is being demonstrated in this photostory?

9.6 The Automatistes shared a collective approach to art-making that emphasized a creative process without preconception. They believed that artists should draw what comes naturally to them and then give the work of art a title after it is completed. Using any art materials you have on hand—paper, canvas, paint, pencil, pencil crayon—attempt to create an artwork using the automatism technique, using Borduas's method of drawing “what the mind sees.” Free your mind and let the image dictate where it goes. Once you feel it is completed, reflect on the experience of making your artwork.

Looking at your artwork, what do you think it represents? What did you like or dislike about this exercise and why? What was challenging and why? Why do you think artists were interested in creating art “without preconception”?

9.7 A manifesto is a strongly worded written statement declaring publicly the intentions, motives, or views of the author(s). What would your manifesto be? Draft a short manifesto about something you are passionate about.

9.8 Take some time to go through the website for the [Initiative for Indigenous Futures](#), a program described as “a partnership of universities and community organizations dedicated to developing multiple visions of Indigenous peoples tomorrow in order to better understand where we need to go today.” How are digital- and cyber-spaces used to encourage Indigenous youth and Elders to envision their own future on their own terms? Choose one example of a workshop, project from the archive, residency, or symposium to illustrate your answer. Lastly, think about the ways that this example engages the idea of collectivity and collectivism.

LOCALITIES

10.1 In *For Folk's Sake*, Erin Morton remarks that “Lewis's reputation grew far beyond her local community. This renown came thanks to the assistance of

such public history makers as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), the popular press, and, eventually, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. These explored her everyday life and art making in radio and TV broadcasts, film, newspaper and magazine articles, and exhibitions. In the words of one writer, recognition of Lewis's work grew quickly because public attention focused on her as "a rural, isolated, poverty stricken, handicapped, female folk artist—the ultimate marginalized outsider," turning her into a marketable hero-figure in the face of adversity" (Morton 2016, 176).

Watch the trailer for the 2017 film *Maudie*, which features two Oscar-nominated actors and was widely circulated at festivals. How does this film compare to the NFB film *Maud Lewis: A World without Shadows* in its treatment of Maud Lewis and of place? How does each portray Nova Scotia? How do they connect the work of Lewis to community and people?

10.2 Alex Colville's work has surpassed the local and, for many, have a universal appeal. His works have been particularly influential for filmmakers. [Watch this clip of curator Andrew Hunter](#) discussing his 2014 exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario on the work of Alex Colville. In what ways do Colville's works transcend geography? Why might they be so appealing to writers and filmmakers?

10.3 Select two artists who participated in the Emma Lake workshops, or two members of the Regina Five. Research their artistic production and compare and contrast two of their works. As part of your research, try to recreate, using any materials you have around you, the works you've selected, to get a sense of the artists' process and method.

10.4 Develop a piece of conceptual art in the style of Askevold's projects class. Write an idea or task and have two or three of your friends execute it and share their results with you. In choosing your friends, think about your own community and network of peers. How does it shape the ways in which they respond to your "Projects Class" task?

10.5 Curnoe's oeuvre also demonstrates a real interest in how language could be explored through visual art. From an early age, he experimented with rubber stamps, his cousin's printing press, and even the date stamps from his father's office. Later, words became the focus of many of his works. Curnoe is also well known for his small-edition artist books. This artwork reads, "What if daily life in Canada is boring?? & what if I am not aware of what is interesting to others about my life??" These phrases represent Curnoe's investigation of Canadian identity, but more importantly they point to his regional or personal interests and suggest how his regionalism connects to Canadian identity more broadly. Reflect on this artwork and ask yourself the following: What does regionalism mean to you? Do you agree with Curnoe that Canadian identity is regional

(based in cities, towns, or other smaller areas), or do you think it is national (based on being Canadian as a whole)? Why?

10.6 Consider *A Sudden Gust of Wind (after Hokusai)* and answer the following questions in 2 or 3 paragraphs: How does Jeff Wall uphold or push against the idea of instantaneity, in this artwork and in his process? How does the idea of “instantaneity” connect with current culture and cultural products? How do traditional cinematic techniques support Jeff Wall in communicating his concept? Look closely at the characters in the work who don’t all appear to connect. Describe what you think their relationships are; what are they all doing here together?

10.7 Diana Thorneycroft is another example of a Winnipeg-based artist whose work, similarly to Dzama’s, considers the darker side of supposedly innocent or benign objects like dolls, toys and cartoon characters. In her series *A People’s History* she uses dolls and toys to craft scenes of events in Manitoban and Canadian history that are often left out or minimized (much like the art of “peripheries” that we’ve examined in this module). Her use of toys in didactic scenes are unsettling. Art historian David Garneau writes about the series as it was displayed in 2011 at the Art Gallery of Regina that:

Diana Thorneycroft’s photographs are excoriating. They are beautiful instruments designed to cause pain. Her child-like play is tainted by a sinister adult knowingness. Her seductive, richly coloured scenes meticulously contrived with dolls, toys, miniatures and backdrops from “Group of Seven” paintings are reminiscent of photo-illustrated storybooks. But the stories they tell are horrific events from Canadian history. These are not tales of the ‘Mad-Trapper,’ train robbers, rumrunners or other rogues whose crimes time renders into colourful legend. These are our national shames that many would rather bury and forget. [...] Thorneycroft has a history of working with dolls. Much of her work concerns the sexualizing and abuse of children. Her pictorial revelations are not designed to titillate but to warn, to break the silence. Secrets shield predators. Perhaps if children were not as protected from adult designs they might be better able to recognize, avoid or call out abusers. I think that Thorneycroft makes these images in a storybook style not to trivialize these events but as a literal model for future story and history books. These are reasonably palatable portals to indigestible realities that children need to know something about in order to protect themselves. Canadians also need to know the fullness of their country’s stories if history is not to repeat itself. (Garneau 2011)

Watch [Thorneycroft’s PechaKucha](#) talk delivered in Winnipeg in 2020 on this series.

Choose one work that she shares and investigate the historical scene using one or two online sources such as [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#). How does Thorneycroft's work interpret the event itself? How does it situate the location where the event occurs and its relevance to Canadian history? How does it unsettle the viewer through her visual style?

10.8 Take a minute to answer the following questions: where were you born, what is your ancestry, and where do you feel a sense of home? What place, what city or location makes you feel at home and like you belong? As the [A Place to Belong](#) a podcast about the history of multiculturalism in Canada has stated:

For many Canadians, the answers to the first two questions probably involve a country outside of what is now Canada. The country we know today has been shaped by policies that encourage immigration and welcome a wide array of people from all corners of the globe. In fact, almost a quarter of Canada's current population is foreign born. But the journey to a multicultural Canada hasn't been a straight path. As you'll learn over the course of this five-part series, government policies in the 19th and 20th centuries restricted or banned mainly non-European communities from entering the country. Even if they were able to settle here, many faced [and face] hardships in a society that historically viewed many immigrants, particularly non-white people, as quote unquote 'undesirable' (A Place to Belong... 2022).

Thinking about Zinnia Naqvi's *The Wanderers – Niagara's Falls, 1988* or Shellie Zhang's *A Place for Wholesome Amusement*, pick one of these artworks and in one or two paragraphs discuss how the artwork you selected engages with themes of migration, belonging, identity, multiculturalism, location, and urban development. Be sure to address visual details in the artworks and consider your own emotional reactions to the work.

ACTIVISM

11.1 Read the following three op-eds (opinions and editorials pages, which are typically published in newspapers and not necessarily by journalists). What perspective does each writer take on this artwork? Do the writers support the premises in the work? Why or why not? What words are used to characterize and describe the work (e.g., unpatriotic, rebellious, timely, activist, good, bad)?

[Toronto Star, "King Edward, Down the Don River without a Paddle" by Murray Whyte](#)

[Vulture, "Forget Art Basel Miami Beach — Put on Your Puffer Coat and Head North to Toronto" by Yaniya Lee](#)

[CBC News, "Dumping Statue in the Don River a Statement about Colonialism, Performance Artists Say" by Makda Ghebreslassie](#)

11.2 Research the removal of a particular monument. What was it removed? What do you think of the removal of controversial monuments from public spaces? [For more you may want to consider points raised in this article by Gary Younge on "Why every single statue should come down".](#)

11.3 Do you think art can or should enact change? Why or why not?

11.4 Watch this short video about the [AIDS Memorial Quilt](#). In what ways is this activist project similar to General Idea's AIDS works? In what ways does it approach AIDS in a different way?

11.5 Were you aware of the significance of the portraits on currency? Research some of the faces on that maybe on the bills in your wallet. Who is depicted? Who is not? Look into some of the other figures considered by the Canadian Mint and other countries.

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11.7 Can you think of an example of another "untaken photo" related to activism in Canada? What would it have depicted? Why does it remain untaken?

11.8 Spend a few minutes looking closely at the poster of Rosemary Brown. What do you see? Write a description of the form, content, and context of the work.

11.9 Select one of the images from the Hope Meets Action: Pictures From the Past exhibition. Write a detailed analysis of the image reflecting your learning from this course.

11.10 What change would you like to see in the world? As a final reflection activity in this module, consider how art could be used to advance an issue you care about. Identify one issue that you would like to address. How exactly could you use art to address this issue? Finally, reflect on any limitations to this approach.