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**CANADIAN ART AND CULTURAL APPROPRIATION:  
EMILY CARR AND THE 1927 EXHIBITION OF  
CANADIAN WEST COAST ART - NATIVE AND MODERN**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

In December 1927, Emily Carr's paintings were shown for the first time in central Canada in an exhibition called Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern. This event was held at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and marked a major turning point in Carr's career, for it brought her acceptance by the intellectual and artistic elite with their powerful networks of influence, as well as national acclaim in the public press. To this point, art historical writings have tended to focus on the artist and her own experiences, and in the process, the importance of this experimental exhibition in which her work was included has been overlooked and marginalized.

This thesis attempts to redress this imbalance by examining the exhibition in detail: first, to analyze the complexities of its ideological premises and the cultural implications of juxtaposing, for the first time in Canada, aboriginal and non-native artistic production within an art gallery setting; second, to consider the roles played by the two curators, Eric Brown, Director of the National Gallery, and C. Marius Barbeau, chief ethnologist at the National Museum; and third, to indicate the ways in which Emily Carr's works and those of the other non-native artists functioned within the exhibition.

During the 1920s, both the National Gallery and the National Museum were caught up in the competitive dynamic of asserting their leadership positions in the cause of Canadian nationalism and the development of a national cultural identity. In this 1927 exhibition, these issues of nationalism, self-definition and the development of a distinctly "Canadian" art permeated its organization and presentation. The appropriated aboriginal cultural material in the museum

collections that had languished within storage cases was to be given a contemporary function. It was to be redeemed as "art," specifically as a "primitive" stage in the teleological development of the constructed field of "Canadian" art history. In this elision process, the curators relegated the native culture to a prehistoric and early historic past, suppressing its own parallel historical and cultural development.

The exhibition also presented the native objects as an available source of decorative design motifs to be exploited by non-native artists, designers and industrial firms in their production of Canadian products, underlining the assumption of the right to control and manipulate the culture of the colonized "Other."

Emily Carr's twenty-six paintings, four hooked rugs and decorated pottery represented the largest contribution from any single artist. In their interpretations of the native culture, Carr and the other non-native artists were also engaged in a "self-other" definition, and had filtered their perceptions through the practices and conventions of western art traditions, especially in the use of modernist techniques. In the context of the exhibition, the artistic production by the fourteen non-native artists, including Carr, was caught up in a reaffirmation of the ideological and cultural positions of the two curators and the institutions they represented. The alternate discourses that could have been provided by the native people remained unheard.



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## INTRODUCTION

In his book Orientalism, Edward Said points out that "all cultures impose connections on raw reality, changing it from free-floating objects into units of knowledge."<sup>1</sup> This process is fundamental to the codification of ideas and information, but when the so-called "raw reality" includes other cultures, the ramifications can be very profound. Said suggests that the tendency for a culture to structure its fields of knowledge in its own terms can lead to the imposition of a "transformation on other cultures, receiving them not as they are, but as, for the benefit of the receiver, they ought to be."<sup>2</sup> These "orientalist" practices, so clearly described in Said's book, provide us with a useful paradigm by which we can analyze the characteristics of power relations between imperial forces and their colonial possessions. It can also give us insights into how the "Other" and its material cultures gets reconstructed by the dominant culture and justified as contributing to modern learning.<sup>3</sup>

These discourses on power relations and cultural reconstruction permeate the legacy of colonialism that has so deeply affected Canada's political, social and cultural history. They run like an undercurrent through the surge of nationalism that emerged during the first two decades of this century, a nationalism that was fostered by the Anglo-Canadian majority and fuelled by the traumatic experience of the First World War, which had left so much revulsion and disillusionment in its wake.<sup>4</sup> As the possibility of a more independent status and the loosening of British imperialist ties caught the Canadian imagination, a conscious and assertive effort was made, especially during the 1920s, to define and construct a distinctively

"Canadian" cultural identity.<sup>5</sup> Ironically, or perhaps not so ironically, at the same time, Canadians seemed to be intent on hastening the cultural demise of the aboriginal people within their national borders, legislating away all differences in the name of hegemony, and forcing assimilation of the native people into the nationalist vision of a homogeneous state, and relegating aboriginal culture to the limbo of an undefined, non-specific past.<sup>6</sup>

Eager to provide the leadership for this growing nationalism was an intellectual and cultural elite, few in number, but ambitious and articulate, and strategically placed to promote the nationalist cause in political and cultural institutions, in business and financial establishments and in the communications industries.<sup>7</sup> In this study of an exhibition called Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern which was held in 1927, two important and influential members of this elite group figure prominently as key players. These individuals were the two curators of this enterprise: Eric Brown, the Director of the National Gallery, and C. Marius Barbeau, the chief ethnologist for the National Museum. Both were actively involved in the definition and validation of a uniquely "Canadian" culture, as individuals and as representatives of their respective institutions.

For the nationalists, the vast untapped resources of the northern wilderness constituted a particularly potent metaphor for the unlimited opportunities open to Canadians to shape their own future. The land itself, perceived as full of potential for economic strength and wealth, was recognized and promoted as the one unifying factor common to all Canadians that could cut across all regional, cultural and language differences. As a result, when the Group of Seven and their predecessor Tom Thomson produced powerful canvases of the boreal forests, northern lakes and barren stretches of the Canadian Shield, their imagery was

interpreted in terms of a symbolism related to cultural and national identity. Out of their paintings emerged an iconography based on natural forms that carried the coded messages of nationalism, and could be anthropomorphized to indicate those special qualities that were considered necessary to live in such a land--tenacity, endurance, stamina, and an optimistic sense of adventure.

During the 1920s, the Group of Seven were the leaders of the artistic elite in Canada, their work exhibited and supported at every opportunity by Eric Brown and the National Gallery, not only for the identification with the nationalist cause, but for the modernist art practices they used to interpret the landscape subject matter.<sup>8</sup> In their distillations of the visual complexities of nature into powerful, simplified forms, the Group drew upon a wide range of styles that had been developed by avant-garde artists during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their means of representation varied from the expressive use of vivid, heightened colours and complementary colour juxtaposition, applied in sweeping, gestural brushstrokes, to the controlled decorative design techniques associated with l'art nouveau, with its curvilinear arabesques, flat areas of unmodelled colour and repetitive surface patterns.

Although the Group's incorporation of such modernist art practices was eclectic and relatively conservative, their canvases were perceived by Canadians as radical, if not revolutionary. The rejection of the prevailing taste for the descriptive illusions of near-photographic naturalism and landscapes of the European countryside in favour of the harsh clarity of the Canadian atmosphere and brilliant colours of the wilderness was seen as a break with the past.<sup>9</sup> The artist's role was to produce within the work of art a "bridge" between the subject and the audience, and to embody the artist's own transformative concepts in its means of representation.<sup>10</sup>

The incorporation of Canadian subject matter in this process was a way of linking both artist and audience with the development of a distinctive culture.

For Lawren Harris, one of the leaders of the Group of Seven, the artistic challenge was closely tied to his belief in Theosophy, its transcendental pantheism and the concept of the mystical quest for self-enlightenment. Within this belief system a special destiny was allocated to the Canadian people, because of their close proximity to the north, a symbol of purity and virtue. In his statements about Canadian culture, Harris' views have a messianic quality and connect his strong support for the nationalist cause with these concepts of a predestined future.

In an article written for The Canadian Bookman in 1923, Harris summed up what he saw as the dangers of a colonial mentality to the development of Canadian art:

*If we imitate the style and mood of the creator of other lands, if we bow to traditions and creeds and taboos imported across the great seas, if we mumble outworn shibboleths and accept the works of other days, other lands in lieu of what we ourselves should create, we permit our powers to wither. We experience no collective purpose. There is no life in us . . . . We are about the business of becoming a nation and must create our own background.<sup>11</sup>*

As a result of the association between a new approach to Canadian art that took as its subject matter the landscape of the wilderness and the introduction of avant-garde art practices to represent that imagery, there was a close connection in the Canadian psyche between the term "modern art" and iconography of natural forms that had been encoded with nationalist symbolism. It was those artists such as the Group of Seven and Emily Carr whose work embodied these concepts that would become the cultural heroes, and the mythology surrounding these artists has become part of our fabric. Their sketching trips into the northern woods have been couched in mystical terms and combined with the perception of the avant-garde



artistic quest into the unknown to push beyond the limits and boundaries set by others. With Emily Carr's successful showing of her work in the exhibition Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern in 1927, and her subsequent acceptance by the intellectual and cultural elite, her two journeys to the native villages in 1912 and 1928 became part of this mythology.

In this study of the 1927 exhibition which marked the first time Carr's works were shown in central Canada, I will examine the particular circumstances in which her paintings, hooked rugs and pottery functioned and the ways in which the content of the exhibition was shaped. I will also indicate how the exhibition evolved as part of a larger scenario and was recontextualized by the powerful political and cultural forces centred in two national institutions--the National Gallery of Canada and the National Museum of Canada.

Both these cultural institutions were caught up in the nationalist fervour by the mid-1920s, and were intent on consolidating their leadership roles in collecting and preserving Canada's cultural heritage. Through the efforts of Eric Brown and Marius Barbeau, the collaboration between the two institutions in the 1927 exhibition presented an opportunity to express ideological positions with regard to aboriginal cultural material, its relationship to non-native artistic production and its place in an Anglo-Canadian constructed culture.

The appropriation of aboriginal objects was fundamental to the exhibition's premise, an indication of Canadian acceptance of hegemonic rule by white society over the native people. In considering these aspects, Edward Said's analysis of the multi-layered systems of colonialism has provided a very useful paradigmatic model for the study of cultural colonialism.<sup>12</sup> Also important to me were the ideas put forward by Roland Barthes in "Myth Today" and his examination of the structure of

myth and implications of signification.<sup>13</sup> Two other works I found of interest in trying to understand the point of view of the ethnologist were James Clifford's Writing Culture and The Predicament of Culture.<sup>14</sup> However, it was Douglas Cole's book Captured Heritage and its examination in vivid detail of the devastating processes unleashed in the so-called "museum age" that changed my thinking with regard to Carr's use of native subject matter in her paintings.<sup>15</sup> Cole's analysis of the Pacific Northwest Coast collection frenzy provided historically-specific background to the concept of "salvage" used by the anthropologists, a concept, I will argue, that was fundamental to Carr's determination to document the totem poles of the aboriginal people.

In my search for primary sources, I have used material from the archives in a number of institutions, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Civilization (formerly the National Museum of Canada), the Glenbow Museum in Calgary and the Vancouver Art Gallery. I am indebted to the Curatorial Department of the National Gallery for giving me access to the Emily Carr, Marius Barbeau and Eric Brown Papers in their collection, and to archival material on the 1927 exhibition. The Emily Carr Papers in the Phyllis Inglis Collection and the Charles F. Newcombe Papers, both in the British Columbia Archives and Records Service in Victoria, were essential research sources for this thesis. In addition I have had access to a number of unpublished manuscripts on ethnological subjects related to the period that have overlapped and reenforced my own findings.<sup>16</sup>

The paintings themselves were a prime source, particularly the Emily Carr Trust Collection, housed in the Vancouver Art Gallery, with which I worked for nearly ten years as Head of the Education Department. The other major source of Carr's early paintings and drawings is the Newcombe Collection in the British Columbia

Archives and Records Service, Victoria. I have also studied other collections of Carr's works in galleries across the country, especially those in the National Gallery, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Glenbow Museum and the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

In my thesis I have not dealt with all the works that were on display, as many are in private collections and their access beyond the scope of this study. I have instead chosen representative works and included both the original titles listed in the 1927 catalogue and the titles by which the works are now known. Along with these reproductions, I have included prints from eight archival photographs of the installation at the National Gallery, taken in 1927. There are also photographic reproductions of the catalogue, the cover of which was designed by Carr the week before the opening, and bears her native name "Klee Wyck."

The reader may find some confusion with regard to variant spellings of place-names. It is important to remember the native languages were oral rather than written, and the names given on maps were the result of phonetic approximations in an attempt to standardize spellings. In 1911 there was an effort to anglicize native place-names for the purposes of surveying, but many of the museum scientists preferred to use the original place-names. One such example is the Skeena village of Kitwanga and its variant spellings of "Gitwanga" or "Gitwangak." In some cases, Emily Carr used different spelling for the same place which has made the cataloguing of her work more complex.

In this analysis of the 1927 exhibition called Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, I examine the political, social and cultural context in which Emily Carr's work was shown and the ways in which her contribution, and that of the other non-native artists, functioned within this bi-cultural display. The purpose of the exhibition was to reconstitute the meaning of the aboriginal works on view, and, in the process, to redeem them as "art." In my thesis, I examine this shift, the implications of the institutional power relations and the roles played by the curators and artists in this ideological construct.

## **NATIONALISM, APPROPRIATION AND THE INSTITUTIONAL ROLE**

Every exhibition of works of art embodies a complex combination of ideological messages and mystification, supported by social systems that extend beyond the event itself. Much as in the production of a play in which only the stage performances are accessible to the public, nearly all the crucial, formulative decisions and procedures are carried on without public scrutiny, either subsumed into the internal workings of the institutional bureaucracy, or linked to structures in society that indirectly help to shape and define our culture.

In discussions of exhibitions, art historical studies have tended to focus on individual artists rather than the cultural constructs in which their work was shown. As a result, the works on display have been perceived as liberated from their exhibition context and able to function separately within a time-frame associated with the artist's own development. Given the role of active agent against a passive/neutral framework, the artist is often mythified and heroized as being above and beyond the mundane, pragmatic world of art politics. For the viewer the appeal of biography is strong, for it allows a close identification with the personal struggles of the individual, rather than with the abstract concepts and theories that guide the formation of the exhibition. In this process, the social, cultural and political dynamics underlying the production of an exhibition are usually relegated to the margins and their implications ignored.

This has been the case with an exhibition held in the National Gallery of Canada in 1927 that was entitled Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern. The significance of its experimental premise has been overlooked in favour of one of the artists included, and the important opportunity it provided for her career.

The artist was Emily Carr, a middle-aged woman from Victoria, whose work was being shown in central Canada for the first-time. Critical reception in the press proclaimed the so-called "discovery" of Carr and singled out her brilliantly-coloured interpretations of native life for national acclaim.<sup>1</sup> More importantly, Carr's future development as an artist was strongly influenced by her contact with the artistic and intellectual elite, particularly the Group of Seven, whom she met on her trip to the exhibition opening.<sup>2</sup> Carr's bold use of simplified, flattened forms, painted with vigorous brushstrokes in heightened, arbitrary colour, signified a painter familiar with the visual language associated with modernism, and she was perceived by the Group as someone who could help spread these contemporary ideas to western audiences in British Columbia, thereby providing another link in their network of influence. The exhibition played a pivotal role in opening up these aspects of Carr's new position as a nationally-recognized artist. However, the question arises: how did Carr's paintings function within the exhibition and in what ways did they relate to the ideological stance embedded in its rationale? Hers was the largest contribution by some margin, and must have affected, and been affected by, its juxtaposition with the native artistic production, since her imagery was filled with its interpretation.

In undertaking a close examination of this exhibition and the role played by Carr's work, it is tempting to fall into the familiar patterns of reception which have been incorporated into exhibition structures. Traditionally, these have been formed

to give works of art the necessary public exposure required for contemplation, recognition and valorization, subsequently leading to their acceptance into the cultural fold.<sup>3</sup> Exhibitions can also be used by the supporting institutions and their curatorial representatives as a vehicle for the expressions of ideology and to promote their own vested interests and socio-political agendas. As the viewer embarks on the ritualized experience of taking a "journey" through the installation, there is little awareness of the ways visual ideas have been manipulated.<sup>4</sup> It is within the institution's power to determine which kinds of artistic ideas will be privileged and which will not, as well as specific ways the chosen work will signify within each presentation. There is a cumulative effect achieved by the viewer's separation from the outside world and the objects' enclosure and decontextualization, the installation of those works to conform to a conceptual premise and program, and the reconstitution of meaning as part of a constructed context within the gallery space. All are designed to contribute to the reinforcement of the exhibition's rationale.

In a situation such as this particular exhibition in which the material culture and way of life of the aboriginal people is used as both subject and subject matter, the messages conveyed, their ideological bias and their methods of transmission must be scrutinized very carefully. The appropriation of one culture by another precludes any alternative discourses that could arise out of different readings of the works, and, as a result, one can assume there is an untold story that could possibly disrupt and even subvert the ideological position functioning throughout the exhibit and its procedures. It is the symbiotic, mutually-beneficial character of exhibition constructs that can provide the clues to finding disjunctions of this kind, for they are often subsumed at a transparent level under the institution's cultural

aegis. These alternative discourses that have been hidden and marginalized within the interpretations of historical documentation have important implications. Through their suppression, fields of knowledge have been constituted to permit the transformation of another culture in one's own terms.<sup>5</sup>

By examining the positions of the participants in this exhibition and those of the curators, and by considering whose interests were being addressed, this event takes on a very different significance from its present marginalized status in art historical writings. In the study of how the chosen works functioned in the exhibition's recontextualization, it becomes apparent that the collaborating institutions and their perceived mandates to represent Canadian cultural concerns were major forces in defining the governing concepts. Emily Carr's paintings were chosen for certain reasons, the overriding one being her choice of subject matter. However, both institutions and the curators had other motives that were disguised by public statements about the exhibition, and Carr's work was not free of the implications. Her works, and those of the other artists, were interpretations of another culture and its living situation. By using the visual language and conventions of western art traditions, their contributions took on the form of psychic and cultural appropriation that was cast in terms their own dominant culture could understand.

The idea for the exhibition had taken form in 1926, and C. Marius Barbeau, the driving force behind it, approached Eric Brown to join him as co-curator.<sup>6</sup> In the small catalogue (see Appendix) prepared for the opening, written statements by Brown and Barbeau summed up the exhibition's raison d'être. Brown put forward his understanding of the underlying premise in these words:

*The purpose of the Trustees of the National Gallery in arranging this exhibition of West Coast Indian Art combined with the work of a number of Canadian artists who, from the days of Paul Kane to the present day, have recorded their impressions of that region, is*



*to mingle for the first time the art work of the Canadian West Coast Tribes with that of our more sophisticated artists in an endeavour to analyze their relationships to one another, if such exist, and particularly to enable this primitive and interesting art to take a definite place as one of the most valuable of Canada's artistic productions.<sup>7</sup>*

When the exhibition opened on 2 December, 1927, the public saw a wide variety of objects that had been housed in the collections of the National Museum of Canada, where they had been categorized and classified by scientists as ethnological "artifacts" or "specimens."<sup>8</sup> In an experimental move that has now become accepted and familiar, objects were taken out of their museum storage cases and installed within the exhibition spaces of the National Gallery to be reassessed as "art" and evaluated by western art traditions. From the vast holdings of native cultural material in the anthropology division, Marius Barbeau had chosen works that would indicate the range and diversity of west coast aboriginal artistic production.

Throughout the gallery installation were placed huge cedar totems with their carved family crests, and in the center of one hall was a large, sea-going Haida canoe.<sup>9</sup> Fastened onto the walls were carved and painted masks, now to be seen as sculptural objects and their formal qualities emphasized. In some rooms, large kerfed boxes incised with the formline ovoids, split-U and salmon trout-head emblems doubled as plinths on which to place other objects (fig. 22, 23) without much regard to cultural difference. Ceremonial dancing robes, such as the Chilkat blankets woven from mountain goat hair (fig. 25) and the button blankets of the Tsimshian (fig. 26) were displayed to reveal their intricate designs.

In the catalogue, Barbeau appears to have simply transferred the generic label information used in the museum classification. Instead of listing each individual

work and its artist, Barbeau has given broad categories such as "Carved and Painted Chests" and "Drums and Rattles." In only one case does a native artist's name appear, even though most of their names were known. In the section on "Slate Carvings," the following statement is included:

*Many of the best pieces of this kind are the work of the famous Haida chief, Edenshaw, and his faithful Tlingit slave.<sup>10</sup>*

Providing a pictorial context into which the native work could be imaginatively placed, and adding a counterpoint to the three-dimensional physicality of the carvings, were works by fourteen non-native artists from across the country. Emily Carr's twenty-six paintings, four hooked rugs and commercial pottery decorated with native designs constituted the largest contribution from any single artist. (Carr's work will be discussed in some depth in Chapter Three.) A.Y. Jackson submitted three large canvases of villages (e.g. fig. 14) and a group of sketch panels, while his painting companion from Montreal, Edwin H. Holgate, participated with thirteen paintings and drawings, some of which are considered to be major works by this artist (figs. 12, 13). From a trip he took to the west coast in 1926, W.H. Phillips, the well-known watercolour painter and printmaker from Winnipeg, chose four watercolours of Kwagiulth houses to be included in the exhibition (e.g. fig. 17). A young American, W. Langdon Kihn, who had worked with Barbeau on his projects, was well-represented in the exhibition with twelve canvases, mostly portraits of the native elders of the Skeena River area (e.g. fig. 15), but also a few village scenes with totem poles (fig. 16).

There were also contributions with native subject matter by two other women artists. Pegi Nichol, who worked in Montreal, was represented by four portraits of Tsimshian elders, and Florence Wyle of Toronto, an American-born sculptor,

participated with a group of small models of totem poles and several plaster head reliefs.

Five of the remaining artists contributed landscape paintings of the northern wilderness of British Columbia, the Rockies and the coastal mountains around Vancouver. Of these painters, three were members of the Group of Seven: Lawren Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald and Fred Varley. In 1926, the year before the exhibition, Varley had moved to Vancouver to teach at the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts. For their contributions, Varley and Charles H. Scott, the principal of the school, submitted a group of painted panels they had done on sketching trips north of Vancouver, in the area around Mount Garibaldi. The fifth artist in this group of landscape painters was Anne Savage, a close friend of both Jackson and Holgate. Her paintings were interpretations of the Gitksan ancestral lands known as "Temlaham," located close to Hazelton in northern British Columbia (fig. 18).

Two artists whose paintings are associated with nineteenth century academic traditions completed the list. The first was Paul Kane, who travelled across the country to document the native people in his paintings and was represented by eight works from the Osler Collection in the Royal Ontario Museum. The other painter was Frederick Bell-Smith, who had made many trips to the west during the late nineteenth century and whose paintings of the Rockies were well-known. One canvas by Bell-Smith from the permanent collection of the National Gallery completed the list of works.<sup>11</sup>

Implicit in these paintings and drawings by the fourteen non-native artists is the wide-ranging power of their possessive gaze. As members of the dominant culture, they assumed as their prerogative an unquestioned freedom of movement, enabling them to travel anywhere in the province, including the native reserves. Involved as

artists with the preservation of western art traditions and using what Peter Bürger calls "the institution of art" with its many subsystems for privileging certain kinds of artistic production, they assumed the right to selectively include the native cultural material in their images, interpreting it as they wished.<sup>12</sup>

With no hint of contact with modern life in any of these images, the native existence was portrayed by the outsiders as one of total separation from those urban, "civilizing" influences associated with white society. By juxtaposing landscape paintings depicting the pristine wilderness with the other canvases, such as those by Carr, that included scenes of villages surrounded by forests and mountains, the curators of the exhibition were able to achieve a visual conflation. In this selective construct that eliminated disruptive images of railways, sawmills, even churches, that were certainly a part of contemporary native life, the stereotypical identification of the aboriginal people with a kind of untouched, "timeless," natural paradise was reenforced. The message conveyed was that of a static and unchanging culture, caught somewhere in the limbo of the past.

In his catalogue statement, Marius Barbeau supports this construct, looking for connections between the native production and anthropological and archaeological finds in other parts of the world. Even though the majority of objects on view in the exhibition dated from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Barbeau places them firmly in the vague realm of the prehistoric. The earliest pieces by native artists were those carvings by Charles Edenshaw who lived during the nineteenth century and was, in fact, born nearly thirty years later than the painter Paul Kane, whose work was included in the exhibition as well. By linking the native objects and totems to the great civilizations of the distant past, Barbeau effectively lifted them out of the same time frame as the non-native artists. In his

catalogue essay, Barbeau discusses the international recognition of this culture, made possible by the vast collections in museums in Britain, Europe and the United States:

*The decorative arts of the West Coast tribes of British Columbia have achieved world-wide fame. They are extensively represented in the state museums of Europe and America. And they favourably compare with the well-known aboriginal arts of Mexico, Africa and the South Seas. Thiebault-Sisson, the French Art critic, wrote last year: "Between the specimens of Canadian West Coast art and those of the Bantus of Africa or of the ancient Aztecs of Mexico, there is an obvious analogy. Yet, the art of the Canadian tribes has advanced further than the others and discloses a much finer culture."*<sup>13</sup>

Later on in his statement, Barbeau relates the native work to both nature and Canadian nationalism:

*A commendable feature of this aboriginal art for us is that it is truly Canadian in its inspiration. It has sprung up wholly from the soil and the sea within our national boundaries.*<sup>14</sup>

In his analysis of the stylistic differences between the northern and southern tribal art forms, Barbeau went on to use the catalogue space as a forum to put forward some of his pet theories regarding the origins of the traditions.<sup>15</sup>

For both Brown and Barbeau, one of the key issues to be addressed in the catalogue and the exhibition was the identification of the native artistic production as "art." Another was its more specific designation as "Canadian" art, and the ways it could be related to the development of a national identity. Since each curator had his own understanding of art and its function, a competitive dynamic was set in place which was to permeate the exhibition's conceptual rationale, its year-long planning and negotiations, the procedures used for the selection of works and the program of the final installation.

The two curators were motivated by different ideological positions, based in the perceived mandates of their respective institutions. The museum was concerned with the collection, classification and systematic codification of scientific knowledge about cultures and their material remains, as well as other fields such as botany, geology, mineralogy and palaeontology.<sup>16</sup> The gallery's functions were defined in the Annual Report for 1921-22 in the following statement:

*The functions of a National Gallery of Art in a country such as Canada are twofold. One is to build up a collection of the standards of all art, ancient and modern, by which modern standards may be judged and sound artistic education obtained. The second important function is to do everything possible for the art of its own country, by purchasing it, exhibiting it and bringing its importance as a national asset and an influence for good before the people generally, and by creating and cultivating in them correct artistic taste.*<sup>17</sup>

When two publicly-funded, state institutions form a partnership, there is the possibility of far-reaching ramifications, since any statement of intent could be read as encompassing federal policy. In the case of two cultural institutions jockeying for dominance under the guise of developing a national culture, any collaboration must be examined carefully for hidden motives. Through the conflation of the two institutional mandates within a single exhibition, an aura of authority and validation was added to the presentation. With the culture of the aboriginal people of the Pacific northwest coast as its subject, the exhibition's rationale takes on the more ominous ideological undercurrent associated with an expression of cultural imperialism.

The gathering of information to reach an understanding of other cultures and their social and political systems has been basic to the study of anthropology, but the constructed field of knowledge in which the data is ordered and evaluated uses the point of view of the observers and their value system, rather than those of the

participants. With an interpretation imposed from outside on the "Other," the expectation follows that the people and their culture under study can be defined as conforming to, or not conforming to, patterns of behaviour established by the interpreters. Any such study is as much a definition of the observers as of the observed.<sup>18</sup>

The notion that museum scientists can reconstruct another culture through the fragmentary evidence of its objects has long been a subject of controversy that calls into question the function of the museum as a custodian of cultural property, and to whom the property belongs. Even Franz Boas, who made his first of ten field trips to the northwest coast in 1886 to begin his major research on the aboriginal people, realized the inadequacy of such scientific studies. What anthropologists were seeking to codify was the whole culture, but only a partial truth was possible to deduce. In an article which Boas wrote for Science in 1907, he commented on some of the intangibles that could not be included in a museum display of objects:

*The psychological as well as the historical relations of cultures, which are the only objects of anthropological inquiry, can not be expressed by an arrangement based on so small a portion of the manifestation of ethnic life as is presented by specimens.*<sup>19</sup>

What was missing, of course, was the living culture itself.

Ironically, there seemed to be no recognition by Boas, or other scientists from the museums, of the self-fulfilling role these institutions were playing in cultural destruction through the international, greed-driven market system of collecting, that flourished throughout the Pacific northwest during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period known as "the Museum Age." As the objects that were central to the aboriginal definition of social status, and to the ceremonial

affirmation of that order through the potlatch, were stripped away by collectors and the potlatch itself banned, the cultures began to disintegrate.

There were other factors at work at the same time, all adding to the discredit and dismemberment of native culture. After passage of the Indian Act of 1884, decision-making powers were largely in the hands of government officials with regard to native settlements. With their mobility restricted, the effects of disease and poverty added to their vulnerability, and assimilation seemed to be the only alternative.<sup>20</sup> Christian missionaries declared their images and mythology to be "pagan" and in 1918, several villages on the Nass River were encouraged to burn their totem poles.<sup>21</sup>

As this process continued to wreak profound social change on the native people, their totem poles were sold, taken down and shipped by the hundreds to museums and collectors in Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States. Inside Canada, the chief recipients were the National Museum in Ottawa, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and the Provincial Museum in Victoria. The competition was intense for these cultural objects, as museum scientists and commissioned collectors vied with one another to bring back the best poles for their museums, "by fair means or foul."<sup>22</sup>

Franz Boas was certainly involved in this collecting frenzy, and his research methods began to alter the way anthropologists thought about native cultures as they collected with museum exhibits in mind. By concentrating on an in-depth, blanket coverage of an ethnic group, Boas and those trained in the Boasian methods shifted the focus away from the evolutionist analyses that had prevailed in the last half of the nineteenth century. His influence on collection and exhibition procedures at the American Museum of Natural History was extremely important,



and at least two generations of museum anthropologists were affected by his ideas.<sup>23</sup> Edward Sapir, appointed as chief of the anthropology division at the National Museum in Ottawa in 1910, had been one of Boas' students, and when he came to work in Canada, he brought those ideas with him.<sup>24</sup>

That same year Marius Barbeau returned from three years of study at Oxford as the first Rhodes scholar from Quebec.<sup>25</sup> Born in the small town of Ste. Marie de la Beauce, Barbeau had taken law as his first degree at Laval University.<sup>26</sup> Once in Oxford in 1907, he became fascinated with the new field of anthropology. As one of only three students, he specialized in northwest coast cultural studies using museum collections for his research. When he returned to Canada in 1910, he carried with him a letter of recommendation addressed to Edward Sapir, suggesting Barbeau for the position of ethnologist in the new anthropology division of the National Museum.<sup>27</sup> Sapir appointed him to the museum staff in January, 1911.

Barbeau and the other scientists at the National Museum followed the approach used by Boas which meant conducting a thorough investigation into all aspects of a cultural group's way of life. Every possible method was employed in order to gain a vast store of information on kinship relations, hereditary crests, the mythology and legends, the poles and their carvers, and other data on which to build an understanding of social and political structures. Informants were interviewed, photographs taken of the people, the poles and the villages, and the sacred songs and legends transferred from the oral state to written notes. By the time Barbeau took his first field trip to the west coast in 1915, anthropologists and members of the parks board were already involved in making silent films of native dances and ceremonies for archival purposes. Officials for the railway were also making films,

but their motives were to increase tourism and to advertise to the public the exotic native cultures to be found in the northern wilderness.

Ironically, as the museum research and exhibits became more comprehensive, the aboriginal people themselves were considered somewhat of an embarrassment, their living situation somehow anomalous in a modern progressive nation. Terms such as "passing race" were used throughout the nineteenth century by anthropologists,<sup>28</sup> and in the early twentieth century one still finds expressions such as "survivals," "living fossils" and "contemporary ancestors" in ethnological writings.<sup>29</sup> This kind of denigration, social rejection and separation can be seen as a non-native recognition of the "Other" in the aboriginal people and their way of life. Yet, a deep fascination remained for the culture. The scientist's mind-set that could encourage wholesale expropriation of thousands of objects from native settlements was able to rationalize these actions in the name of general knowledge. It was considered part of the museums' mandate to "salvage" what remained of the culture, its traditions and its production in order to pass on knowledge about their function and meaning. In the institutions the objects were preserved from decay, yet were termed "primitive" and deprived of their own historical development and denied any relationship to the present in this constructed knowledge.

Underlying these ideas was an entrenched belief in white superiority. The widespread acceptance of the social Darwinist hierarchy that placed white society at the high point of western civilization was considered justification for its dominance over the native people.<sup>30</sup> The appalling poverty and despair on the reserves was taken as evidence of aboriginal racial inferiority.

With the hegemonic dominance of a paternal Anglo-Canadian society, there was little possibility of maintaining a distinct, vital native culture in which artistic traditions

could flourish. Diamond Jenness, the chief of the anthropology division after Sapir's retirement in 1925, wrote a comprehensive book on the Indians of Canada in 1932 and had this to say:

*Socially, they are outcasts, economically they are inefficient and an encumbrance. Their old world has fallen in ruins, and, helpless in the face of a catastrophe they cannot understand, they vainly seek refuge in its shattered foundations. The end of this century, it seems safe to predict, will see very few survivors.<sup>31</sup>*

The eventual disappearance of the native people was taken as a foregone conclusion because of their displacement in the thrust of expansionism and industrialization. They were expected to leave their traditions and their art behind and assimilate into white society, even though there was no place for them due to discrimination. The "salvage" operations of the museums did not extend to the people themselves, aside from the occasional side-show performances at international exhibitions. It was only the material culture that was to be saved as an example of the "primitive" and "exotic," against which white society could define and perhaps measure itself.

In the exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, this material culture that had languished in the museum cases was now to receive a contemporary function. It was to be given redemption as a prehistoric and early historic stage in the teleological development of western art, specifically Canadian art. In the curators' attempts to cross the entrenched boundaries between science and art, the native objects were given a confused and ambiguous role of both

ethnological specimen and work of art. In terms of their exhibition function, the objects were positioned between two different typologies, but in both curatorial statements they were appropriated to fill the void of an early period in Canadian art

history, a constructed field that began with sixteenth century exploration and was followed with a layering of transposed artistic traditions. To be able to claim the native artistic production as part of "Canadian" art would provide a longer continuum of cultural heritage in which Anglo-Canadian nationalism could find a historical base. It would also emphasize what Brown called the "sophistication" of the modernist artists in the exhibition, their association with power and knowledge systems compared with the native people, and their place on the teleological leading edge of art historical development in the country.

The result was that the history of the native art was erased and its parallel development ignored and suppressed. The whole process was awash with cultural guilt, and the reconstruction of native cultural history as "Canadian" said more about the needs of the appropriators to find a place for these objects, rather than to recognize them for what they were--the spoils of colonialism. The voice of the native artist was not heard, and the totems placed in the gallery were silent metaphors for a people whose culture and history had been taken from them.

It would be tempting to credit Barbeau's proposal for a bi-cultural exhibition as a conscious effort to break down the barriers between art and artifact, and to link the catalogue premise to find relationships between the two forms of artistic production with the shifts taking place in Europe, Britain and the United States in anthropological studies that questioned the evolutionist categorization of native material as the product of "intuitive primitivity or 'savage mind'."<sup>32</sup> Barbeau certainly respected the tribal groups he was studying and had always responded to the aesthetic qualities of the objects he so aggressively collected. It is, however, doubtful if he was aware of the profound influence so-called "primitive" art had had on the development of modernism in the late nineteenth century, particularly on the

avant-garde paintings of Gauguin, Matisse and Picasso and the German Expressionists.<sup>33</sup> There is no reason to believe he had any interest in the discourse on primitivism, which would have provided Eric Brown with a strong basis for holding the exhibition in the National Gallery.

In the late nineteenth century, the major impact of "primitive" art forms such as Japanese prints, African masks, archaic sculpture and ceramics, and carvings from Oceania on the works of European avant-garde artists had gone a long way in undermining the exclusivity of the western academic traditions. Many of the radical changes in the means of representation, such as the use of distortion, flattened surfaces, non-natural colour and decorative motifs, can be traced to a manipulation of these non-western traditions. Through this bi-cultural exhibition, Barbeau and Brown were offering a similar opportunity for radical change to the non-native artists, but neither curator seems to have drawn the parallel. Each was absorbed in his own agenda, and the cause of nationalism.

Barbeau's plans for the exhibition began to take form in 1926. His first idea was to include with the native objects an exhibit of paintings by W. Langdon Kihn, the young American artist that had worked for him as an ethnological illustrator for Barbeau's popular writings on the Stoney tribe in southern Alberta and the Kootenays of south-eastern British Columbia.<sup>34</sup> Barbeau had first met Kihn in 1922 and was attracted to the strong, poster-like colours the painter used. He was particularly impressed with Kihn's portraits of native people, which appeared to be accurate in every detail.

When Barbeau took a field trip to the Skeena River area in 1924, Kihn accompanied him and became entranced with the Tsimshian people and their legends. He stayed in Kitwancool and the surrounding villages for nearly nine

months, painting village scenes with totem poles and portraits of the elders and chiefs.<sup>35</sup>

Of the sixty canvases "Larry" Kihn painted that year, the majority were portraits that displayed ceremonial robes and headdresses, symbolic of the sitter's status. Barbeau was delighted with their ethnological details and persuaded his close friend William Southam, the newspaper publisher, to purchase forty of these works.<sup>36</sup> Southam then divided the collection between some half-dozen institutions and museums across the country, perhaps also at Barbeau's instigation.

Six of these 1924 works were donated by Southam to the National Museum, and five were installed in the museum's east exhibition hall, "where they. . .attracted much favourable attention."<sup>37</sup> It must have occurred to Barbeau that a display of the whole collection would not only complement an exhibition of objects from the Skeena area, but would also draw increased support for his projects with the Tsimshian people. As far as Barbeau was concerned, Kihn's paintings were an admirable example of the merging of art and science, and certainly worthy of being hung in the National Gallery.

Barbeau could justify his combination of native material with documentary imagery by artists in precedents set in the late nineteenth century. One example with which he was familiar was a display originally constructed for the World's Columbia Exhibition of 1893, usually referred to as the Chicago World's Fair. At this international exhibition, one of many held during this period, a vast array of northwest coast objects was presented to the public. Included in the exhibition were "three boxcarloads of Haida material,"<sup>38</sup> collected by Franz Boas' team of assistants, as well as "some 2,474 items, supplemented by another 500"<sup>39</sup> that had been collected by George T. Emmons and Sheldon Jackson for the American

Museum of Natural History in New York. Among the displays was a complete, three-dimensional model of the Haida village of Skidegate on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Behind the carved totems and houses was a large painted backdrop, showing the thick forests of pine and the piles of driftwood along the beach. After the fair, this exhibit became a part of the permanent collection on native culture displayed at the Field Museum in Chicago.<sup>40</sup>

Another example familiar to Barbeau was the mural decoration in the American Museum of Natural History. In the so-called "Indian Halls," huge wall paintings were incorporated as background for the objects in the collection. They were described in an article published in 1913 in the American Museum Journal as an aspect of the museum's "conscious educational trend by which it attempts to make its exhibits attract the masses of people who are without scientific training and probably have no especial scientific interests."<sup>41</sup> The article goes on to indicate the criteria for art in the service of science, in order to present a more holistic experience for the viewer:

*What are essential and cannot be told except on canvas are the natural environment in which the Indian lives, his village spread over a wide area and his stately and weird dances. It is only through the aid of the artist that the mythology of the Indian can be interpreted, and the artist's success is directly dependent on his knowledge and the degree in which he enters into the spirit of Indian life. Decorations in the Indian Halls must possess archaeological and ethnological accuracy as the first consideration; after that the artist is free to give a poetical and more or less mystical interpretation.*<sup>42</sup>

Barbeau would have seen Kihn's paintings as answering this criteria and the fact that his canvases were based in the Skeena area made them more appropriate as documentary material that could supplement the Tsimshian collections and his own field research.

More than likely it was on the insistence of Eric Brown and the board of trustees at the National Gallery that the comparative aspect of the exhibition was established, and that modernist paintings such as those by members of the Group of Seven, and Carr at a later point, be included along with Kihn's works, to act as a kind of artistic counter-weight to the museum objects. Brown would have been very aware of the politics of space and the importance of building the gallery's image in the public mind.

Brown had gained a considerable reputation as an art critic in England before emigrating to Canada in 1909, and he continued to write articles for art magazines such as The Studio throughout his life.<sup>43</sup> His keen interest in contemporary art movements may have developed from his early training as a painter, although the "modern art" he supported was the less radical, more tasteful version he had encountered in British art. As an avid reader he was certainly familiar with the writings of Clive Bell and Roger Fry, as well as their efforts to bring avant-garde ideas before the British public during the early part of the twentieth century. He was also aware of the wide influence of Bell's theories that were centered around the search for "significant form," or what might be called the "essence" of the subject matter chosen for a painting.<sup>44</sup> In the process of stripping away the external details to find the underlying structural forms, an abstraction is produced. In this simplification, Bell discerned a universal quality that separated the subject from its localizing elements that gave it historical specificity.

Here the two curators, and the goals of the institutions they represented, were at odds. The emphasis on mimesis which Barbeau felt was absolutely necessary for ethnographical subject matter was the antithesis of those concepts associated with "modern art" to which Brown was committed. There would obviously have to be



some compromises in the choice of artists and works to be included with the native cultural material. Barbeau understood the kind of art that complemented his own field of scientific research and could be perceived as presenting correct, objectively-rendered visual information. He understood there were certain aspects of the imagery, such as the landscape surroundings, in which the artist could incorporate his or her own ideas, but the visual descriptions of ethnological subject matter had to have exact proportions, delineation of forms and accurate interrelationships between the elements in order to coincide with the objects themselves, and to give a more realistic recontextualization.

Brown's major concerns were tied to those of the National Gallery and the influence that he, as director, could exert over artistic developments across the country. In the Annual Report of 1923-24, he spoke of the gallery's lofty purpose as "the education of public taste and the elevation of national character."<sup>45</sup> He believed that a nation's art treasures were among its greatest assets, and "that there was never a great nation that had not a great art."<sup>46</sup> At a more pragmatic level, he felt that public recognition and support of a strong national school of art would provide employment to artists, designers and craftsmen in a competitive world. The result would be the formation of more art galleries and art schools across the country, providing another network for the National Gallery's influence.<sup>47</sup> As it was, there were loan exhibitions going to centers across the country from the gallery's permanent collection that began to reflect Brown's fascination with the Group of Seven. Since he was in a position to decide which kinds of art would have public exposure, Brown saw himself as instrumental in the formation of a Canadian national identity.

As a member of the powerful Anglo-Canadian intellectual and artistic elite, Brown worked closely with the board of trustees at the gallery, especially its chairman Sir B. Edmund Walker, who was also the head of the Canadian Bank of Commerce and chairman of the board at the Royal Ontario Museum. After Walker's death in 1926, Vincent Massey became an influential member of the board as well as patron of the arts, spreading the concept of a culture based on the Canadian experience through his many political connections. Brown, Walker and Massey used their positions to help affirm the National Gallery's role in creating the "spiritual cement of a national will" which would give the country unity, and their assumption of leadership wrought some amazing changes through the 1920s.<sup>48</sup> Mary Vipond describes it this way:

*Here then lay the role of the intelligentsia, the artists and the writers--to create a national feeling and to focus and direct it. It was a role with equal appeal to those who already saw themselves as Canada's leaders and to those aspiring to take their place among that select group.<sup>49</sup>*

Brown took his public role seriously and was on the lookout for artists who could meld the initiatives of nationalism and contemporary artistic ideas together. He realized how important it was to build a strong national constituency for the acceptance of experimental Canadian art, since a knowledgeable public would make his task easier.

In searching for reasons why Barbeau proposed an exhibition that would bring two very different kinds of cultural expression together under the banner of "Canadian art," the situation in which the two curators were working should be considered and what each had to gain from an exhibition that conflated two ideological positions.

By the middle of the 1920s, the issue of space allocation was a major concern for the National Gallery and the National Museum. Both institutions were housed under the same roof, each occupying different sections of the Victoria Memorial Museum. Located in the center of Ottawa, the museum building had originally been constructed to display the large collections gathered by the Geological Survey over its eighty-year history, but from the time of its opening in 1911, the space had been inadequate. The museum's first director, R.W. Brock, set out to create "a Canadian Museum of Natural history, mineralogy and geology," and to assist in its institutionalization, he hired an array of specialists.<sup>50</sup> One of these was Edward Sapir, an American scholar, who was to head the new division of anthropology. Marius Barbeau, Harlan I. Smith, Diamond Jenness and T.F. McIlwraith became members of this division, each bringing his own expertise to the study of indigenous peoples.

Two years later the National Gallery was formed, given a director and curator in the person of Eric Brown, and allotted the top three floors of the east wing of the Victoria Memorial Museum for its exhibition spaces and administrative offices. Immediately, there was competition for space between the two institutions since each wanted to expand its role, its collections and its credibility as a national cultural institution.

With the outbreak of war in 1914, the funding from the government was redirected to the war effort, curtailing nearly all activities aside from lectures to the public and permanent collection loans to other museums and galleries. Then, in 1916, a large part of the East Block of the Houses of Parliament was destroyed by fire. The Victoria Memorial Museum's space was seconded by the government for

its parliamentary proceedings and administration, and the business of running the country was carried on within the museum's walls until 1920.

It was only in May, 1920, that the museum and gallery staff could come into their building again to set up the collections and to try to establish some kind of order. Their disorientation was compounded when not only these two institutions were reinstated in the building, but the four floors were to be shared with the administrative offices of the Geological Survey, the staff of the Department of Mines and the Dominion Fuel Board. In every annual report from 1926 on, both the museum and the gallery directors commented on the desperate need for more space.

In January, 1927, the museum received the new official title of National Museum of Canada.<sup>51</sup> Although it had had its own director since 1921, the museum was still jointly administered by the Geological Survey and the Department of Mines, and its funding was a part of the allocation to the divisions of anthropology and biology.<sup>52</sup> Since the major part of the museum's section of the building was taken up with offices, museum cases and permanent displays, there was no real possibility of mounting a large exhibition in their halls. In this year to celebrate the museum's more autonomous position and new status, one can imagine Barbeau eying the east wing of the building with its displays of Renaissance paintings and Canadian landscapes as an ideal place for his exhibition.

As well as giving publicity to the museum's new title, there were other issues that could be addressed through a joint exhibition with the National Gallery. Both the museum scientists and the board of trustees at the gallery understood the advantages of promoting connections with the private sector to bring in donations and funding for projects. They also recognized the business and educational

opportunities to be explored which, in turn, would establish their institutional standing throughout the country.

This close relationship with business and education had been nurtured for a number of years. In the National Gallery's Annual Report for 1921, the then chairman of the board, Sir B. Edmund Walker, discussed the importance of developing art forms that were distinctly "Canadian." As a businessman, Walker's interest lay in finding ways art could be used by industry and commerce to help place the country on a firm and economically self-sufficient footing. In the report, addressed to the Minister of Public Works, the Honourable F.B. McCurdy, Walker makes his position clear. He suggests that

*. . . the support of art in Canada is not only far from being the support of an aesthetic luxury but is quite definitely the support of an economic necessity of the greatest national importance. All commerce is in the last analysis dependent upon successful design and design is dependent upon art.*<sup>53</sup>

Walker continues in his statement to indicate the reality of Canadian industrial dependence on designs developed in Europe. In the post-war situation, many of these sources were no longer available, and Walker felt it was vitally important to encourage artists in this country to produce designs that were based on Canadian motifs. To aid this program, training courses could be set up in the art schools across the country to provide commercial opportunities for artists.<sup>54</sup> The National Gallery's policy of sending loan exhibitions of works from the permanent collection to centers in every province was expected to increase public interest and emphasize the necessity of developing Canadian artistic talent. Walker goes on to suggest a mutually-beneficial system should be established that would encourage Canadian economic development: those Canadian design motifs produced by artists through their training at art schools could be used by Canadian manufacturers for

their products. Here was art and design in the service of big business, and all "made in Canada."

The board's efforts to encourage the development of business connections between art schools and industry appeared to be progressive, but was, in fact, a politically conservative and highly pragmatic approach that could appease taxpayers' questions about institutional elitism, and, at the same time, solve some of the gallery's financial woes. Walker makes the point that the \$20,000 allocated to the gallery for the year 1920-21 was one-fifth of the annual appropriation from the government before the war.<sup>55</sup> As a result, he warned, the board of trustees would have to resort to their network of independent sources for funding the gallery. He intimated that these sources in the private sector would likely be those same manufacturing firms that could be interested in Canadian designs.

But what kind of designs would be considered "Canadian?" Part of the answer can be found in an article written by Harlan I. Smith, an archaeologist at the National Museum. Smith set out a program that was to function for about ten years through the museum and was to introduce manufacturing firms to native designs.

In his article, published in 1918 in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, the most prestigious academic group in the country, Smith suggests the following:

*In order to guide the manufacturers towards the production of purely Canadian designs, it seems that the early Indian art might well serve as a suitable starting point.*<sup>56</sup>

The year before, Smith had proposed to the Geological Survey the publication of a selection of 400 designs taken from native cultural material found in archaeological sites across the country. Even before a publication date had been finalized, Smith

wrote to some 800 firms to let them know the designs were available for their use. He also published information on the design program in the Canadian Manufacturer's Association journal and gave a number of public lectures on the project.

It is very likely that Smith was aware of a similar and very successful venture underway at the American Museum of Natural History in New York to encourage American textile manufacturers to use fabric designs from museum specimens. In 1916, Esther Coster had published an article in the American Museum Journal entitled "Decorative Value of American Indian Art," in which the author indicates how the distinctive designs belonging to different tribes across the United States could be adapted to ceramic ware, textile design and metal work. Coster cautions that "in adapting Indian motives, the primitive spirit must be retained . . . to counteract the tendency to overdecoration, mechanical technique and lack of individuality."<sup>57</sup>

Both these museum programs were promoting the appropriated material for their decorative appeal and adaptability to the manufacturer of products for use in everyday life. The symbolic and sometimes sacred meaning of these decorations had been completely erased and a new utilitarian function imposed. The essentialism in this view that perceived the decorations to be based on forms from nature that were free and separate in concept from the object, and assumed that their simplicity was evidence of a lack of sophistication, betrays a nostalgic longing for a less mechanized world, free of the conformity of mass production. Implicit in the need for the "Other" as a balance to the experience of white urbanized society is also the presumption that all cultural property is held in common.

In his article for the Royal Society of Canada, Harlan I. Smith recognizes the barriers of prejudice against the native people and the possibility of reluctance to using their designs. He describes a book prop made by a Miss Young which used a design taken from a copper engraving found by archaeologists in British Columbia. Smith states that in reworking the Indian copper design, Young's decorative motif "is far enough developed to prevent those who dislike anything Indian from recognizing its sources, yet it is distinctly British Columbian. It is made of Canadian clay and is artistic."<sup>58</sup>

The design elements of native art played an important part in the 1927 exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, for in the catalogue essays, it was this aspect above all others that was stressed. Under the aegis of "Canadian art" the native work was to receive recognition only in terms of its possible use to white society.

Eric Brown comments on the changes to native culture in his written statement, but clearly indicates the uses to which the work could be put:

*The disappearance of these arts under the penetration of trade and civilization is more regrettable than can be imagined and it is of the utmost importance that every possible effort be made to retain and revivify whatever remnants still exist into a permanent production, however limited in quantity. Enough however remains of the old arts to prove an invaluable mine of decorative design which is available to the student for a host of different purposes and possessing for the Canadian artist in particular the unique quality of being entirely national in its origin and character.*<sup>59</sup>

For his part, Marius Barbeau also discusses the decorative aspects, but points out as well the integral place of the objects in everyday life:

*It is in their carvings, their paintings and their textiles, as illustrated in this exhibition, that the native artists manifest their amazing sense of decorative fitness and beauty. Their art was no idle pursuit for them or their tribesmen, but fulfilled an all-essential function in their everyday life . . . And it is remarkable how skillfully the native artists have adapted their designs to the*



*exacting nature of their materials, while striving to serve a public purpose that constantly stimulated their originality and taxed their creative talents to the utmost.<sup>60</sup>*

There is no question that both curators were concerned with connecting the exhibition to the museum's design program, as well as the initiatives to link the institution's goals with those of business and with the education of artists and designers. Their nationalistic concerns were interwoven with self-interest and the promotion of the institutions' socio-cultural roles.

There was another reason for holding this exhibition that was also tied in with another museum project that had been initiated by Harlan I. Smith and Barbeau: the restoration of the totem poles of the Skeena River villages. In his research and field work among the Tsimshian people, Barbeau had become convinced that the Skeena and Nass River area villages had the finest poles, and that all other northwest coast carving traditions had sprung from this single origin.<sup>61</sup> Within an exhibition, he felt he could show what he considered to be the superiority of the northern carving styles and would be able to expound his theories on the origins and migrations of the aboriginal people.

One of Barbeau's chief interests was in conveying his ideas, theories and knowledge to the public, and he wrote many books and articles on the northwest coast subjects for both professional and popular publications. His public lectures often included his own performances of native songs and dances, despite the fact that these were considered to be the private cultural property of the native people. This process of appropriation enters into what Roland Barthes calls "a second-order semiological system." Barbeau's restructuring and reinterpretation of primary cultural material for his own purposes, and to make it more palatable and interesting for his audience, fits into Barthes' structure of myth, in which "that which is a sign . . . in

the first system becomes a signifier in the second."<sup>62</sup> As an expert on the Gitksan and Niska'a social structures, traditions and ceremonies, he had established "his" anthropological territory of study. As a member of the dominant culture, his presumption of the role of speaker for the aboriginal people was also an affirmation of hegemonic cultural control.

Barbeau's focus on the Skeena villages and their poles took on a schizophrenic split in this project which was based in the idea of preserving the poles in the villages, rather than letting them be acquired by museums, especially American museums. As the National Museum's ethnologist, he had been responsible for acquiring some fifteen poles from the Niska'a people of the Nass River area alone, and he did continue to buy up poles for his own museum and others over the next five years. Considered the most assiduous collector at the National Museum, he had become something of an entrepreneur in the field, spending in the summer of 1927 the amount of \$1,468.75 for masks, poles and other carvings, far beyond the museum's appropriation fund of \$500.<sup>63</sup>

The impetus for the project to restore the poles in situ had come from public pressure and growing concern for the fate of those poles that still stood in the villages. Scientists at the museum offered a number of suggestions, including Edward Sapir's idea that all the poles should be bought for their protection, presumably by the museum or the government. The Canadian Parks Board and the Royal Society of Canada members insisted that legislation should be passed to keep the poles in the country. Amendments to the Indian Act to this effect were added in 1927, even though it was a bit like locking the barn door after the horse had gone.<sup>64</sup> Ironically, that same year, the Department of Indian Affairs was severely enforcing legislation aimed at wiping out the potlatch and the continuance

of native traditions. The result was that the extant poles, both those in the villages and in the collections, became rarities and their value in the market system increased.

When totem poles are first raised, they are firmly secured in the ground. Their life expectancy, weathering the wind, rain and sun, is about sixty years and even if the base has been treated, decay can set in below ground and the poles will start to lean. If they are not supported, they can fall to the ground to be reclaimed by undergrowth and insects. To reinstate a pole or raise a new one was an expensive proposition for the native owner, and collectors in the field looking for a profit would watch for the bad fishery seasons! In the 1920s a pole could be bought for around \$500 to \$800, then resold to a private collector or a museum for two to three times that amount. As Douglas Cole has suggested, "the British Columbia totem pole had become an endangered specimen."<sup>65</sup>

A whole new prospect opened up with the idea of leaving the poles where they were, instead of collecting them for museums. That prospect was tourism. With the completion of the Canadian National Railway line from Edmonton through the Skeena River valley to Prince Rupert, the whole area became more accessible to development and the native villages would provide tourists with exotic places to visit. The anthropologists and officials with the railway believed a new interest could be generated among the native people to make carvings for the tourist trade, and if the villages were declared to be historic sites, this designation would hopefully protect them from deterioration.

In his book entitled Captured Heritage, Douglas Cole vividly describes the details of this project, beginning with Barbeau's proposal in 1923 for the establishment of an "Indian National Park of Temlaham."<sup>66</sup> In bringing his idea before J.B. Harkin of

the Canadian National Parks Board, Barbeau was setting up connections with other governmental bodies in order to exert pressure and extend his own influence.

In 1924, Dr. Charles Camsell, the deputy minister of the Department of Mines, brought together a group to form the "Totem Pole Preservation Committee." The four other members aside from Camsell were Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir from the National Museum, J.B. Harkin of the Parks Board, and the deputy superintendent-general of the Department of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott.<sup>67</sup> Scott, known to the Anglo-Canadian intelligentsia as a poet, was an individual who wielded enormous power over the lives of the native people.

The committee delegated Barbeau to travel to the Skeena area and to record all the information he could on the poles, their positions, owners, and present physical condition. Barbeau was enthusiastic about the project, and set off with Larry Kihn to the five villages in the summer of 1924. As Cole suggests, Barbeau knew the preliminary process of negotiation would have to take place, and Harlan I. Smith was designated as liaison. Barbeau's confidence was high:

*Provided that the consent and cooperation of the Indians were obtained and the authorization of each chief and owner was secured before any work began, he felt confident that the majority would be glad to see the government strengthen their poles and re-erect those that had fallen.*<sup>68</sup>

Barbeau returned with his records on seventy-one poles in the five villages of Kispiox, Hazelton, Hagwelget, Kitsegukla and Kitwanga, all places Carr had visited in 1912, and would again in 1928. Barbeau and Kihn photographed as much as they could, and Kihn made precise contour drawings of the iconographic details for the project.

With Duncan Campbell Scott in charge and T.B. Campbell, an engineer from the Canadian National Railway to oversee the lifting and installation of the poles into

concrete bases, the project was underway in the summer of 1925. Smith's attempts to persuade the native people met with resistance, as the natives felt certain the government "would own the poles if it spent money preserving them."<sup>69</sup> Despite this, as Cole reports, seven poles were restored that year and nine in 1926. Kitwanga was chosen as the first village, since it was on the railway line and therefore available to tourists.

More and more suspicion and anger met the totem pole preservation crew. Their resistance to the project was particularly understandable when the poles "were re-erected in rather unimaginative straight lines and were so brightly painted . . . they were hardly recognizable as some of the finest pieces of native art in the country."<sup>70</sup> According to Cole, it was the Department of Indian Affairs policy, under Duncan Campbell Scott and with agreement from museum scientists, that the poles should be preserved on the sites that could be developed for tourism; those in the more remote and inaccessible areas of the province should be bought and transported to museums.<sup>71</sup>

By 1927, every aspect of native life was being monitored, analyzed and classified under the Department of Indian Affairs' network. With the banning of the potlatch in 1884 through the Indian Act and further amendments and reenforcement of restrictions in 1914, 1918 and the spring of 1927, Duncan Campbell Scott was in a position to define and organize political, legislative and judicial power over all activities on the reserves. The museum scientists, in the cause of scientific research and education, and in collusion with the Department, assumed the mandate of collection, preservation and use of specimens and native cultural material, even though there were large groups of native people still relating to that cultural heritage in their communities.

Masking the political realities of this paternalistic control was a widespread romanticization that envisioned native life as a simple, uncorrupted existence in the natural wilderness. The result was a certain amount of ambivalence in the attitudes of liberal, middle-class Anglo-Canadians towards the aboriginal people. On the one hand, there was deep-seated prejudice that insisted on separation between the two cultures; on the other hand, there was also an identification with and fascination for native attitudes to nature as found in their so-called "pagan" mythology. Native crafts were collected for homes, and many spend their summers hunting, fishing and paddling canoes in the wilderness in an imitation of native life. This attempt to identify with the "Other" was, in part, a longing for escape from the social constrictions and stress of urban life, but there was also a strong nationalist association with the northern wilderness and a belief in its mystical, regenerative powers. The mythic vision of "Nature" was widened to include the aboriginal people as a natural aspect of the untamed landscape, its wildness and unpredictability transferred to them as intrinsic characteristics. As a result, the exhibition's selective vision was a reenforcement of middle-class values and the myths that disguised the real situation for the native people.

That situation was one of despair on the reserves. The dominant culture's power/knowledge relations between legislative, scientific, cultural, industrial, commercial and artistic structures and systems amounted to a proverbial Foucaudian "eye of power" that had been put in place to supervise the fate of the "passing races" and, in fact, to speed their cultural destruction.<sup>72</sup> In the process, native material culture was to be redeemed as "art" within the "sanctuary" of a national cultural Institution.

## THE EXHIBITION: STRUCTURE, MYTHS AND AGENDAS

By the beginning of the summer of 1927, the exhibition planning for Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern was well underway, spurred on by Marius Barbeau's irrepressible energy and enthusiasm. In his position as chief ethnologist at the museum, he was well aware of the possibilities for publicity the exhibition could bring, not only to the institutions involved, but to his own agenda. Eric Brown was in Europe that spring, mounting an exhibition of Canadian art in Paris,<sup>1</sup> and, on his return, he and his wife Maud set out on a cross-country lecture tour. It appeared that Barbeau's criteria with its emphasis on ethnological documentation would dominate the choice of paintings to accompany the native objects in the exhibition.

At the top of Barbeau's list was the work of Larry Kihn, most particularly the portraits he had completed during their trip to the Skeena River villages in 1924. Barbeau first heard of Kihn in 1921 when an exhibition of the American artist's portraits of the Blackfoot of Montana and the Pueblo of New Mexico had toured to over forty centers in the United States, including New York and Seattle.

Through Barbeau's efforts, Larry Kihn was invited to Canada to meet John Murray Gibbon, the general publicity agent for the Canadian National Railway. Gibbon was intrigued with Kihn's works and could see the possibilities for encouraging tourism. In 1922, on behalf of the railway officials, he commissioned

Kihn to paint a set of portraits of the native people who lived in proximity to the railway line.<sup>2</sup> Coincidentally perhaps, Barbeau was researching these same native groups for a book. When it was published in 1923 under the title Indian Days in the Canadian Rockies, reproductions of fifteen of these commissioned paintings by Kihn were included.<sup>3</sup>

The following year, when Barbeau was instructed by the Totem Pole Preservation Committee to document the seventy poles still standing in the Skeena villages, he immediately thought of Kihn as the appropriate artist to work with him on the project.

The sixty or more canvases Kihn produced during his nine months in the Tsimshian settlements must have impressed Barbeau, for he arranged for their exhibition in the spring of 1925 in the halls of the Houses of Parliament, then later at the Art Club in Montreal.<sup>4</sup> Through showing Kihn's work, Barbeau hoped to gain support for the artist, but also governmental and public recognition for the museum's projects. He also wanted to encourage industrial and manufacturing firms to see for themselves some of the native designs that could be used in their products. The sale of forty of these works to newspaper publishers William Southam and Sons further substantiated Barbeau's conviction that Kihn's paintings should dominate the exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, and these forty works headed his list.

The highly decorative style developed by Kihn in his portraits is easily recognizable for its use of both two-and three-dimensional effects in the same work. These paintings bring together an odd mixture of design techniques associated with commercial illustration with a realistic likeness of the sitter. To achieve the subtle gradations of tone in depicting the facial forms, Kihn frequently used conté to give



the features a convincing roundness and solidity. Attention to the face is brought into close focus by Kihn's precise delineation of every detail, from the minute creases and folds in the skin to every single strand of hair. In his portrait of Laelt (fig. 15), the elder is shown seated, his head slightly bent to one side and his face in near-profile.<sup>5</sup> The expression is impassive, the eyes closed. In contrast to the realistic treatment of the facial features, the rest of the figure and the background are flattened and simplified into broad decorative shapes. Painted in a matte gouache, the vivid, poster-like colours fix the image to the surface plane, denying any suggestion of depth.

Robed in the button blanket of the people of the Copper Shield, and wearing his eagle and frog headdress with its tufts of eagle down, Laelt is enclosed by his status symbols and talking stick. As this native elder is changed from an individual with presence and form into a vehicle for the museum design project, the display of motifs and patterns is already of importance within the portrait, and the cultural meanings of the iconography and its place in ceremonial ritual are lost.

In a review of Kihn's work, published in The Studio in 1925, Leonard Richmond comments on the "severity of handling, and economy of detailed forms," as well as the "sumptuous decoration and gaiety of colours." Kihn is called "a master of design and significant form,"<sup>7</sup> the latter phrase a reference to the theories of English formalist art critic Clive Bell.

Kihn was also publishing articles at this time and receiving a good deal of attention from the media. In an article on the Gitksan people, published in the February 1926 issue of Scribner's Magazine, Kihn disclaimed any influence from academic theory and ideology:

*I am neither a historian nor an ethnologist, just an artist pure and simple, and I want to take my reader into an artist's paradise.<sup>8</sup>*

He goes on to describe this "paradise" as a kind of uncorrupted Eden, in which the Tsimshian lived an idyllic existence on their ancestral lands of Temlaham until the coming of the white civilization. He decries this intrusion and laments the changes taking place as a result of contact. In his remarks, Kihn says that the Skeena villages where he painted over a period of nine months represented "one of the last strongholds" of this unique culture.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to this idealization and romanticization of the situation for the native people before contact with white society, Kihn reveals a stereotypical view that was commonly held about them:

*They have an optimistic soul, are like children, forget their troubles--put them aside quickly--and they are happiest when dancing. Talking of their condition, they are melancholy; they realise that they will not last much longer.<sup>10</sup>*

Clearly, here was an artist who was in tune with Marius Barbeau and his needs. Twenty-three years later, in a letter to Dr. Alcock, the head of Folklore Archives at the University of Laval, Barbeau remarked, "There is nothing comparable to this grand repertory in pictures of the Indian life on one continent . . . ." Speaking later of Kihn and the three exhibitions of his work in 1925, Barbeau admitted that

*Kihn's success made it easy for me later to induce Eastern Canadian Painters, including some of the Group of Seven, to extend their activities to the Northwest. Alexander Jackson of Toronto and Edwin Holgate of Montreal were the first, after Kihn, to initiate the movement.<sup>11</sup>*

This "movement" of which Barbeau spoke was largely his own imaginary construction. A.Y. Jackson and Barbeau had been close friends since 1921, and the two men had travelled to the Charlevoix district of Quebec in the summer of 1925, Jackson to sketch the villages, and Barbeau to collect wood carvings and

handicrafts.<sup>12</sup> They were joined by Arthur Lismer, another member of the Group of Seven, who also made a number of drawings. During this trip to Quebec, the subject of illustrations for publications arose, and Barbeau, who had already used pen and ink drawings by Jackson in one of his earlier books, told the artists about his work with the Tsimshian people. Jackson offered to go with Barbeau to the Skeena River area the following summer, presumably with publication of his paintings and drawings in mind.

That summer of 1926 found both Jackson and Barbeau in the village of Hazelton, a largely white settlement, and the native settlements of Hagwelget, Kitwanga, Kispiox and Kitsegukla. They were accompanied by Edwin Holgate, a painter from Montreal whom Jackson had known since 1920. The two artists had been on sketching trips together before, and they sketched and painted the houses and graveyards, the poles and surrounding mountains, and Holgate produced a number of portraits.

Farther down the Skeena River in the Kitselas Canyon was another village where Holgate produced his remarkable portrait drawing of Chief Gaum of the Kitselas people (fig. 12). In writing about Holgate, Dennis Reid recounts the artist's memories of this chief as an individual filled with "intense pride," who "never once looked at Barbeau while communicating with him through an interpreter."<sup>13</sup> Using charcoal, Holgate portrayed Gaum's distinctive profile, his long thin jaw thrust forward, and heightened the dramatic likeness with vivid touches of red conté on the headdress.

Holgate's best known painting from this trip is Totem Poles, Gitsegiuklas (fig. 13), a large work completed later in Montreal.<sup>14</sup> To frame and contain the imagery of mountains, houses, the figure of a woman and a small sleeping dog, Holgate

used the massive, vertical, columnar forms of the totems. Their carved beaks and staring eyes dominate the painting and a horizontal bar protruding from the pole on the right seems to press down on the enclosed scene, locking the people, their settlement and the natural surroundings into a single totalistic whole. Holgate has eliminated the details of decoration, emphasizing instead the structural form and sculptural quality of the poles, as their dramatic profiles seem to bite into the fabric of native life and define its existence. Once again, the stereotypical perception of the native people underlies the white artist's work.

The peripatetic Jackson also painted Kitsegukla (or Gitsegiuklas), but he called his work Skeena Crossing, the Anglo-Canadian name given to the village. One of three large paintings by Jackson (fig. 14) included in the 1927 exhibition, Skeena Crossing depicts a cluster of ramshackle houses with vivid blue mountains in the background. As with his other sketches from that summer of 1926, Jackson chose a vantage point outside the village which permitted a more generalized and detached approach to the imagery. Using broad gestural brushstrokes that erased all specific details, Jackson merged the warm umbers and red-browns of the wooden buildings with the autumn colours of the trees set just behind on the right. In front of the house, a string of dark totem poles lean against the sky, their crest faces turned away from the viewer. Jackson's concerns were with compositional structure, with the materiality of paint and the connecting links between the simplified forms, placing an emphasis on the formal elements. This "universalizing" approach that sought for the significant form rather than the local specificity was aided by the distant vantage point, but also by Jackson's means of representation that emphasized the painterly surface and the underlying rhythms in the landscape.

To provide visual interest that would give his painting a certain amount of aerial perspective, Jackson included a few picturesque elements to bring the middle ground into focus. Out of a large gaping hole in the broken roof of the house to the left of the painting wafts smoke from an indoor cooking fire, evidence of poverty that has been naturalized and aestheticized by the artist. This aspect of the work could be read within the commonly-held stereotype of the native way of life that insisted the aboriginal people were disinterested in improvement and change, and were content to live in the wilderness setting. By conflating native and nature into one concept, the perception could be rationalized that this state of existence was evidence of native inferiority, but also that it imaged a life free from the corrupting influences of modernity.

In spite of their aestheticization of this imagery, both Jackson and Holgate were affected by the depressing situation in which they found themselves. In Kitwanga they were appalled when they saw the results of the totem pole "restoration" project which had been completed in that village the summer before.<sup>15</sup> T.B. Campbell, Harlan I. Smith and the crew from the Canadian National Railway had fixed the poles in concrete bases and painted the weathered and silvered cedar carvings with garish house paint, all but destroying the subtlety of the forms. Holgate was later to write that he felt he was "witnessing the rapid decline of a splendid race of creative and well-organized people." For him "there persisted a brooding gloom . . . impossible to dispel."<sup>16</sup> Neither artist returned again to paint these native villages.

Kihn, Jackson and Holgate were now on Barbeau's list for the exhibition. All had gone to the Skeena through his efforts, not only for the adventure of such an experience, but for the images they would produce, which could then be used by Barbeau for his publications and the exhibition. In the late fall of 1926 when

Barbeau's ideas about the possibility of an exhibition were forming, he was also planning two publications.<sup>17</sup> The first was to be a scholarly study for the museum of the upper Skeena River totem poles, based on material he had collected in 1924 and 1926, and in which he planned to incorporate some of the contour drawings of the poles which Kihn had produced. The second book was to be written for the general public on the so-called "Skeena River Rebellion" of 1887.<sup>18</sup> Barbeau had conducted many interviews and transcribed legends as part of his ethnological research. In his book, he planned to rewrite three of these legends about the rebellion, using his own "legendese" which involved imitating the story-telling style of the Tsimshian, and then giving his own version as if it was a translation. Barbeau knew his book would have wider currency with the public if it was illustrated by well-known artists such as Holgate and Jackson. When The Downfall of Temlaham was published in July, 1928, it included reproductions of works done by these three artists, as well as others who were in the exhibition. The linkage between the field trips, the paintings and sketches by the artists, the exhibition and Barbeau's own vested interests was clear.

By February, 1927, the list of non-native artists had been extended to include three more painters--Lawren Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald and Fred Varley. Although Varley's work was not chosen until October, 1927, Brown knew that as members of the Group of Seven, these artists would incorporate their iconography of natural forms that had come to be associated with Canadian nationalism. Harris and MacDonald were represented by a selection of small painted panels from sketching trips to the Rockies. Varley also contributed mountain sketches, not of the Rockies, but the ranges just north of Vancouver which had become favourite painting grounds for this artist who had moved to British Columbia in 1926 to head the

painting department of the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts. The school had opened in 1925, and Varley was feeling the isolation and lack of an "understanding atmosphere" for his approach to art.<sup>19</sup> Both Brown and Barbeau would have seen him as a "modern" painter in the west, bringing the Group of Seven's ideas to the students, and an obvious choice for the exhibition, even if he had not painted native subject matter.

The principal of the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts, Charles H. Scott, was also added to the list for the exhibition. This was perhaps a political move and to help Varley's position, but it may have been because the school itself represented the sort of institution that could carry out the education program for artists that both the National Gallery and the National Museum had in mind. The school's objectives were to direct those intending to work in the trades, in manufacturing and the professions in a "thorough practical knowledge of industrial design, drawing, modelling, and decorative painting . . ."<sup>20</sup> The museum's project of taking design motifs from native cultural material and applying them to commerce and industry would fit into the school program very well. Scott was also represented by a group of sketches of the mountainous landscape around Vancouver.

By adding these images of a rugged, unpeopled landscape, untouched by contemporary life and symbolic of the heroic quest into the unknown, to those of Kihn, Jackson and Holgate, the conflation of the native presence with the remote wilderness was reenforced. By choosing works by the Group of Seven, the curators validated this integration in terms of the belief systems of the Anglo-Canadian artistic elite. In the process, the exhibition was given the stamp of paternalistic cultural authority. Of these six men chosen to represent "modern" art,

four were members of the Group of Seven, the fifth a colleague from Montreal who was to become a member three years later, and the sixth, an American who was known for his ethnologically-correct portraits of native people. Only three had included images of native life in their works for the exhibition, and of these, only Kihn would continue to paint the native subject matter. With their inclusion in the exhibition, it could be inferred that all had accepted the curatorial premise to promote native artistic production as "Canadian" art, and that their gendered gaze was expected to represent the perception of contemporary artists, including women.

To give historical weight to the display, two more artists were added to the list. Eight canvases by Paul Kane were borrowed from the Osler collection at the Royal Ontario Museum to emphasize the long tradition of interpreting the native way of life through works of art. Kane's momentous journey that took him across the country from Ontario to the west coast began in 1846, and followed many of the fur-trading routes. His experiences are eloquently recorded in the collection of one hundred paintings he completed on his return and in his journals. During the two-year trip, Kane's chief concern was to document through hundreds of drawings and watercolour sketches the ethnological details of the native groups he encountered.

In his final canvases developed from the documentary sketches, Kane romanticized and idealized the western landscape and transformed the native people into "noble savages" so that his paintings would be acceptable within the institution of art. For Brown, these paintings represented the addition of western Canadian imagery in established works of art, but, more importantly, they signified the kind of transposed vision from European academies that was typical of the colonial period, and those traditions from which the Group of Seven and other contemporary artists had broken free. By including Kane's paintings, a teleological



direction in the historical development of Canadian art would be indicated, with the leading edge given to those works by the Group of Seven.

Another historical figure, Frederick Bell-Smith, was represented by one canvas called Mists and Glaciers of the Selkirks, dated 1911. Beginning in 1887, Bell-Smith had made over twenty trips to the west travelling on the Canadian Pacific Railway through the Rockies. In his writings he is effusive in his comments on the mountains. In rather saccharine poetics, he writes of the Selkirks as "displaying the glint of their glacial accoutrements" and inviting "the enraptured pilgrim to explore their mysteries and their shrines."<sup>21</sup> Brown's choice of this work which was part of the National Gallery's permanent collection provides a historical reference to the mountain paintings by Harris, MacDonald, Varley and Scott. Rather than pursuing the veiled mystery alluded to by Bell-Smith, the Group of Seven and Scott simplified the complexity of the forbidding landscape, blocking in the massive forms to emphasize their harsh reality and monumentality. With the addition of Kane and Bell-Smith, there were eight male artists to provide a visual counterpoint to the native works, with Kihn's forty paintings expected to dominate this section of the exhibition.

The gender imbalance of the proposed exhibition was addressed in the summer of 1927 when the work of three women artists was included in the exhibition list. The first of these was Anne Savage, a founding member of the Beaver Hall Group in Montreal. She had painted with both Jackson and Holgate, exhibiting her landscapes through this short-lived but vital association of artists, who worked together in a studio building on Beaver Hall Square.<sup>22</sup> Holgate was a leading member and it is certainly likely Savage heard about the trip that Jackson and Holgate had taken with Barbeau to the Skeena River area in 1926.

Savage had become well-known in Montreal, not only for her paintings, but for her radical approach to teaching art. Employed as a high school teacher at Baron Byng High School, she was able to change much of the educational system at the high school level, so that children's art could be valued for itself rather than as 59 incompetent attempts to imitate adult work. Arthur Lismer of the Group of Seven became interested in her methods and was able to incorporate her approach in his Saturday morning classes for children when he became the head of the art education program at the Art Gallery of Toronto in 1927. Ironically, it is Lismer who has been known for these programs, not Savage.

The second artist to be placed on the list was Pegi Nichol of Ottawa, who had studied with Franklin Brownell and later at the École des Beaux-Arts in Montreal. Nichol, who became an enthusiastic member of the artistic community when she was still a student, was a close friend of Eric Brown and his wife Maud.<sup>23</sup>

The third artist was Florence Wyle, an American-born sculptor who, with her partner Frances Loring, had fought for the acceptance of sculpture in Canadian galleries and collections.<sup>24</sup> Wyle had gained considerable respect for her bronzes of Women's Work in the War, a series that showed some of the involvement of women in industry during World War I. It was only in 1926 that she had her first major solo exhibition and was accorded full membership in the Royal Canadian Academy as the first woman sculptor to enter their ranks.

Rebecca Sisler, who has written on the R.C.A., claims that Wyle was "commissioned by the Canadian government to visit the West Coast Indian villages and model totem poles as a historical record."<sup>25</sup> This was likely Brown's suggestion, for he had been under constant siege from the Academy's conservative members, ever since the Wembley Exhibition in 1924 when the Canadian section

included a large number of Group of Seven paintings. Wyle had been a member of the jury which selected the paintings to go to England, and Brown would certainly have seen in her an ally in the promotion of contemporary ideas in art.

Wyle did go to the Skeena River area, along with Savage and Nichol, who were invited by Barbeau to accompany him on his field trip in the summer 1927. Another reason for accompanying Barbeau, aside from having their travel paid, was the very strong prospect that their work would be shown in the exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art- Native and Modern. That summer Savage produced a number of landscape paintings of the ancestral lands of the Gitksan, the rolling country near the juncture of the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers that Barbeau called "Temlaham."<sup>26</sup> One painting and a group of sketches were hung in the exhibition, and the painting was reproduced in Barbeau's book The Downfall of Temlaham. Nichol contributed four portraits of village elders, and Wyle showed some model totems and relief heads of plaster.

There appears to have been a conscious effort on the part of the curators, not only to have a better gender balance, but also a national representation of artists by extending beyond Ontario to Quebec, through Holgate and Savage, and to British Columbia with Varley and Scott. For Barbeau, this wider scope would bear out his claim of a "national movement" of artists interested in native subject matter. Brown's commitment to establish a national school of art that was distinctly "Canadian" and to spread an understanding of contemporary artistic ideas could also be served, along with the construct that located the native objects within this teleological development.

To accomplish these ends, both curators had encouraged friends and commissioned others to produce the specific visual manifestations that would

support their concepts underlying the exhibition. The myths that were constructed were tailored to be advantageous to curatorial and institutional agendas. At the same time, the native artistic production entered the institution of western art and became entangled in its subsystems of commodification and valorization.

The thirteenth artist brought representation from the prairies. W.J. Phillips, a good friend of Eric Brown, was an important figure in the development of colour woodblock prints. His training in the British watercolour techniques of layering coloured washes within given linear constructions complemented his printmaking experiments, and he was responsible for establishing a strong interest among painters in taking their work a stage further into prints. He had a keen interest in the decorative use of colour and line which was developed when he went to London, England, in 1924 to study print techniques for a year with a Japanese master. The perception of nature that he absorbed in these studies carried over in his interpretations of the Canadian landscape.<sup>27</sup>

Phillips lived in Winnipeg which kept him isolated from the turmoil surrounding current ideas in artistic exploration, but he did have a strong link with those artists who were interested in finding commercial outlets for their art, such as book illustration. Phillips was becoming well-known as a graphic artist in England and the United States, and his prints were collected by the National Gallery.

Although a tenuous link could be made between the nineteenth century avant-garde's perception of Japanese prints as an important source for modern art, and Phillips' fascination with the processes and use of the technique developed by the Japanese printmakers, Phillips was, in fact, a reactionary as far as modernism was concerned. In his column that he wrote for The Winnipeg Tribune for a number of years, he vented his rage at the ugliness he saw in abstraction. For him, the

pursuit of "natural beauty" was the most important concern of the artist, and he was certain that the Group of Seven's work was only a passing phase.<sup>28</sup>

In the summer of 1926, Phillips had travelled to the Rockies and the west coast, sketching in watercolour the landscape of British Columbia and some of the native villages he visited located in Kingcome Inlet. He wrote of his travels to Mamalilicoola (fig. 17) where he painted the houses and totem poles.<sup>29</sup> His description of one of the poles conveys his own discomfort with the image before him:

*The outer flats are covered with coarse grass and are bare of trees which made the uncouth monument which arose before us all the more startling and incongruous. This "monstrum horrendum" is a single nude figure carved from a huge cedar log . . . the grotesque and grinning face is turned towards the sea. Not a nice sight for a nervous man . . .*<sup>30</sup>

Phillips visited other places that had been sketching grounds for Emily Carr in 1912, including Tsatsisnuchomi and Karlukwees, and the watercolour paintings he produced on this trip were included in the exhibition. At a later date he also made colour woodblock prints of these works.

There was one last person to contact as a possible addition to the list. This artist was Emily Carr, about whom the curators had heard in 1921 through a letter written to Brown by Harold Mortimer-Lamb. Lamb was a mining engineer and photographer who had moved to Vancouver from Montreal, and was becoming known for his art criticism and reviews of exhibitions. He was an enthusiastic supporter of Vancouver artists Charles H. Scott and John Vanderpant, but was also interested in the Group of Seven and their interpretations of the Canadian wilderness.

In the fall of 1921, Harold Mortimer-Lamb visited Emily Carr's studio in Victoria and saw the paintings of totem poles and native villages she had produced between 1907 and 1913. He was greatly impressed with her work, particularly the canvases from her major trip in 1912 to the villages in northern British Columbia. He decided to write a letter to Eric Brown to suggest the National Gallery should buy Carr's collection. It was likely that Lamb had thought of the National Gallery as a possible patron, since Brown had travelled to Vancouver that summer for the first time, giving lectures on the gallery's permanent collection. As an institution the National Gallery was only known in the west through the annual loan exhibitions that were sent out from Ottawa to centers across the country, and Brown realized the importance of connecting with the artistic communities and building the gallery's reputation through support of Canadian art.<sup>31</sup>

In his letter to Brown, dated 24 October, 1921, Lamb described Carr's paintings with great enthusiasm, trying to place them in both anthropological and artistic camps. He stressed their value as historical and ethnological records, since they depicted the totems and villages at the end of the first decade of the century. He also praised the paintings as works of art, finding them "highly meritorious from an artistic standpoint, being fine in colour and broad and vigorous in treatment . . ."<sup>32</sup>

Lamb went on to say,

*Miss Carr assures me that the respective representations were done with the utmost fidelity to material facts; and it is therefore all the more extraordinary that she had been able to impress her work with an undoubted pictorial charm . . . She will only sell the pictures as a collection, and it seems to me very desirable that they should be purchased by either the Dominion or the Provincial Governments. Do you think the National Gallery would be interested in this matter?*<sup>33</sup>

In his response to Lamb's letter, Eric Brown wrote the following:

*I think Miss Carr's pictures sound as if they would be more interesting to a Provincial or National Museum than to the National Gallery, although no doubt they have, as you say, some artistic merit.*<sup>34</sup>

Brown indicates clearly here his separation between fine art and what he surmised was anthropological documentation. He had no visual images by which he could make any judgement of Carr's work, and could only take Lamb's word for their quality. This letter from Lamb had arrived at an awkward time for the gallery, for it was the first year that the institution had been reinstated in the Victoria Memorial Museum since their space had been seconded by parliament. Their funding was only \$20,000 for the year and to buy a large collection such as Carr's would be out of the question.<sup>35</sup> Brown was also caught up in his promotion of the Group of Seven, who had shown together for the first time the year before, and Carr's work, as described by Lamb, probably did not fit into his ideas about Canadian art. He continued in his reply to Lamb by saying,

*In any case, the National Gallery would not be interested in a collection of pictures and at the present time I regret to say that economics would prevent any purchase of any kind.*<sup>36</sup>

Brown sent Lamb's letter about Carr to the anthropology division of the National Museum, where it was put on file. It is not clear whether or not Barbeau read the letter at this time, but six years later when the exhibition was being planned, Lamb's recommendation offered the possibility of another artist. It would certainly have been politically astute to include a woman artist from the west. All that remained was to see Carr's work and to judge whether or not it should be added to the list. Eric Brown planned to give a lecture tour to the western provinces in the late summer of 1927, and decided to visit Emily Carr's studio in Victoria while he was on the west coast.

This was to be Brown's third lecture tour to the cities in western Canada, the others given in 1921 and 1922. Eric Brown and his wife Maud took every opportunity to lecture on the National Gallery, its collection and its policies, but Brown's other interest was to promote his own role in bringing modern art to the provinces through loan exhibitions that featured works by the Group of Seven. In making arrangements for these annual loan exhibitions in centers such as Winnipeg, Regina and Calgary, Brown had to counter a considerable amount of resentment over what was interpreted as his paternalistic attitude, and the imposition of the gallery's artistic taste on others, with little regard for local needs or demands.<sup>37</sup> The criticism centered around the complete lack of any representation of works of art from the west in these travelling exhibitions, and the apparent equation of central Canadian art with a "national" art. To meet this criticism, Brown was able to tell his audiences of the introduction of an annual Canadian exhibition to be held at the National Gallery, that would bring together works of art selected from regional exhibitions by local juries.<sup>38</sup>

By the time Brown went to see Emily Carr, there were a number of pressures already in place to choose her work for the exhibition. Although the native objects would locate the focus in British Columbia, the only artists to represent the province were Varley and Scott, and Varley was still associated with the Group of Seven and a central Canadian bias. Each of the other artists had brought an outsider's point of view. If Brown could include another artist from that province, and a woman artist at that, this would help his own political position.

When Eric Brown and his wife Maud visited Carr's studio on 12 September, they were overwhelmed by her work. There was no question in Brown's mind that Carr's work was good enough to dominate the exhibition. In a lecture he gave the



next day in Victoria, Brown praised Carr's paintings and told the audience he hoped to include a large number of them in the exhibition that was to be held in the National Gallery that year. Brown's comments, which appeared in the Victoria Daily Colonist on 14 September, placed Carr in a national context:

*You have here in Victoria one of the most interesting painters in the whole of Canada. Miss Carr's work is quite extraordinarily good, as good as anything that is being done in the country . . .*<sup>39</sup>

He also talked about the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts, which he was sure would "produce good students and build up an appreciation of good art." Besides Carr, four other artists--Ina Uhthoff, Charles H. Scott, Fred Varley and J.W.G. Macdonald--were singled out for commendation. In his reference to Victoria, he suggested that "our little gallery at the Crystal Garden . . . has the foundations for a very much bigger gallery,"<sup>40</sup> He mentioned that works could be borrowed from the American Federation of Arts and the American Association of Art Museum Directors, of which he had been elected president in 1924. Brown was taking the opportunity to establish a power base in the west, to encourage recognition of Canadian artists and to promote the National Gallery's position in this network.

Brown was so pleased with Carr's work, he asked her to send around fifty oils and watercolours to Ottawa from which the curators could choose works for the exhibition.<sup>41</sup> On his return to Ottawa, he wrote to Barbeau about Carr and that he was "favourably impressed with her work."<sup>42</sup> When Barbeau replied to Brown's letter, he was in Vancouver giving a series of lectures at the University of British Columbia, having completed his field trip to northern settlements with the three women artists.

Barbeau's letter is dated 3 October, 1927, and it sets out the progress of the exhibition to that point. Barbeau says how pleased he was to hear about Brown's visit to Carr's studio, and added that he planned to travel to Victoria on 14 October and would arrange to visit Carr as well. He mentioned that in Hazelton, one of the Skeena River settlements, he had seen four of Carr's works that must have dated from her trip in 1912, and that he considered

*they were certainly from a genuine artist. Miss Savage who saw them, is supposed to have described one of them as 'a masterpiece.'*<sup>43</sup>

Barbeau went on to talk about the exhibition plans. Fred Varley had not yet been approached for paintings, and Barbeau offered to see the artist in his Vancouver studio and to select some works to be sent to Ottawa. He suggested that he would be back in Ottawa on 21 October, and would be available to help "in every way I can."<sup>44</sup>

It may have been that as far as the museum was concerned Barbeau had taken too dominant a role, for it appears that he was encountering some administrative problems, especially with the head of the anthropology division, Diamond Jenness. Having laid the groundwork and arranged for six artists to produce works in the Skeena River area, Barbeau appears to have decided to take a less obvious profile:

*The museum side of it will have to be handled carefully especially at first. Jenness' vanities will have to be taken care of. But when the thing is started through him, I will be able to help you informally I believe.*<sup>45</sup>

Barbeau continued on, discussing the exhibition artists:

*Have you already written to Holgate about his things? We should be sure that he is not to be away from Montreal at the time. Lawren Harris, Jackson, MacDonald, Miss Wyle and Miss Savage have materials at our disposal. As you say, we should have Pegi Nichol also represented in as many pictures as suit the general plan.*<sup>46</sup>

It would appear from this letter that Barbeau was now leaving the final negotiations to Brown. From Brown's vantage point, Emily Carr offered him the opportunity to introduce a western artist to the artistic elite in central Canada, and at the same time to shift the balance within the exhibition away from the ethnological emphasis to more of a dialogue with the modernist component.

Emily Carr's letters to Brown over the next month are full of nervous excitement at the prospect of having her paintings shown in central Canada. Her first letter to thank him for coming to see her was addressed to the Empress Hotel in Victoria and likely reached him before he left for Ottawa. She expressed her appreciation to him in these words:

*It is like a breath of inspiration coming from the outside world to our quiet corner and makes me feel the struggle is worth while. I have such a deep love for the Indian people and these old quaint corners of theirs that it gives me the courage to keep on.<sup>47</sup>*

Carr's emphasis on her isolation was to become an on-going theme in her writing and her own image of herself as an avant-garde artist waiting to be "discovered."

The two weeks following Brown's visit were filled with activity for Carr as she chose the paintings to be sent to Ottawa and packed them into crates. By 28 September she had shipped twenty-seven oil paintings, twenty untitled and unframed watercolours, and a square crate containing seven additional oil panels of single totem poles. She had included the oil panels, even if they were not insured, as she felt that "they were important pole specimens and would make your exhibit more complete."<sup>48</sup>

Brown also requested some of Carr's handbuilt pottery and hooked rugs, both of which were decorated with native designs. One can speculate that it was Barbeau's idea to include these, along with the paintings, as his own interests were

very much involved with the aesthetic qualities of functional objects. As a manifestation of the museum project to apply native design motifs to products, both the pottery and the rugs could be perceived as a bridge between the native artistic production and the non-native paintings. They would link in with the native baskets, utensils and weavings, indicating the kinds of adaptations that could be made to the decoration of objects used in everyday life. When Barbeau visited Carr in the second week of October, it is likely he told her of his own interest in handicrafts, that the rugs and pottery would be useful to the exhibition and perhaps could be sold as well.

The exhibition artists had all been chosen. Out of the fifty-four paintings Carr had shipped to the National Gallery, twenty-six oil paintings were chosen for the exhibition; the others were placed in the gallery storage, as Brown hoped to show Carr's watercolours in the Canadian Annual Exhibition which was to be held in the spring.

Although the exhibition had been scheduled for the third week of November as its opening, the date was moved back to 2 December. The exhibition was to show for a month at the National Gallery, and then travel to the Art Gallery of Toronto and the Art Association of Montreal.<sup>49</sup> Since the Haida canoe was difficult to transport and would occupy a considerable amount of floor space, it did not travel to the other cities.

In an interview with a reporter for the Ottawa Evening Citizen that appeared on 10 November, Marius Barbeau placed himself in the foreground once again. In his statement, he began by explaining the idea behind the exhibition. He said that

*. . . the idea underlying the show was that the artistic work of the western Indians has so much character and life to it, so much which modern artists find inspiring, and so much which is distinctively Canadian and which might well be used to help form*

*the basis of a national art, that the promoters of the exhibition decided to put on a show which would include the aboriginal art, both ancient and modern, and through the paintings of modern artists, show the reaction it had on white painters.<sup>50</sup>*

Barbeau followed this summation of the concept by a discussion of his "discovery" of Emily Carr. He picks up Carr's own statements about her "discouragement over the utter lack of public interest"<sup>51</sup> in her work in Victoria which resulted in Carr discontinuing painting after 1914. This was not, in fact, the case, since Carr had been painting and exhibiting since 1924, but the myth of "discovery" was connected to a Cinderella syndrome in which the talented woman painter was rescued from oblivion by a member of the patriarchal elite, a myth in which both Carr and Barbeau participated.

The reporter put forward Barbeau's claim in these words:

*It was not until this year that Mr. Barbeau, looking for material, found her and her brilliant work, some of which will be shown in the coming exhibition. Besides painting, Miss Carr also makes pottery and hooked rugs, using Indian designs in their decoration.<sup>52</sup>*

With this statement to the press, Barbeau set the stage for Carr's national acclaim, but her work was defined within the exhibition's parameters and his own role. Carr and her paintings were circumscribed by Barbeau before they had even been seen by the public, and her own position as an artist established by the hierarchy of curatorial power. Within this subsystem of the institution of western art, those in the administrative positions determined the form of culture and who could participate in its construction. Both Brown and Barbeau were promoting their own vested interests in this exhibition, and Carr and her work were drawn into their definition.

In her journal Hundreds and Thousands, Emily Carr vividly described the events in November 1927 leading up to the opening of the exhibition. As with any diary,

the focus is on her own circumstances and experiences, but, in the process of recounting the anecdotal details, a number of comments are included that shed light on the exhibition procedures and practices and the close-knit artistic elite who controlled the installation.<sup>53</sup>

Carr listed the people who had come to help with the hanging which began on 22 November, the day she arrived at the gallery. Marius Barbeau and Eric Brown were both there, as well as Brown's assistant director, H.O. McCurry. Arthur Lismer was in the city and was there to help. From Montreal Edwin Holgate and George Pepper had arrived and would stay through for the opening. Pegi Nichol was also there, but only the men participated in the installation process. From Carr's comments, it would appear there were differences of opinion which led to "haggling" between them. Suddenly faced with the other artists' imagery of the native subject matter, Carr tried to evaluate her paintings with regard to theirs, and in her comments her own defensiveness is evident.

One week earlier, when Carr had met the Group of Seven in their studios in Toronto, she was somewhat taken aback to see Jackson's canvases of the Skeena villages. In her journal entry for 14 November, she wrote,

*I felt a little as if beaten at my own game. His Indian pictures have something mine lack--rhythm, poetry. Mine are so downright. But perhaps his haven't quite the love in them of the people and the country that mine have. How could they? He is not a Westerner and I took no liberties. I worked for history and cold fact.<sup>54</sup>*

Her comments dated 22 November discuss some of the other artists' works that she saw spread around the gallery floor:

*They gave me a royal welcome and we went down to the lower floor. There sat the exhibition all round the floor. They were just starting to hang it. There are ripping things of Langdon Kihn, and Mr. Holgate and Mr. Jackson. I felt my work looked dead and dull,*

*but they all say I have more of the spirit of the Indian than the others.*<sup>55</sup>

She went on to talk condescendingly about Pegi Nichol's work, calling it "feeble."

Then she remarked,

*Poor kid, she's so enthusiastic, a dear little soul, and perhaps it will carry her on. She's young.*<sup>56</sup>

The exhibition experience was to give Carr an opportunity to meet the artists and curators, to see the other interpretations of the native subject matter and to see the effects of the installation that fixed her paintings, decorated pottery and hooked rugs within an organizational construct, and in juxtaposition with the native objects.

The final installation was formal and stiff, with the emphasis on balance and symmetry, an approach that was frequently used in exhibitions of the period. Every wall was treated like a symmetrical design, and a specific place allocated for works according to their size and shape. Even the masks were hung in a precisely-measured pattern, as if they were conforming to a template. A kind of structural hierarchy was formulated, with the central grouping on each wall given the dominant position, and paintings and native works interspersed evenly on each side in a symmetrical fashion (figs. 22, 23, 25). On one wall, decorated canoe paddles were lined up as vertical forms in order to balance the horizontality of the canvases (fig. 22, 25), and on another, mountain goat horn ladles were tacked right onto the wall between paintings (fig. 24).

Throughout the installation, this formality and order imposed a certain authority, the dominance in the procedure that implied control over all the cultural property on view, and the right to manipulate the presentation according to the dominant value system. Every individual object had a particular place in the structural system, and its individual meaning was changed through its assimilation into the overall schema.

The central groupings were also symmetrical, echoing the formline designs on the kerfed boxes, totems, masks and utensils, and the patterns on the Chilkat weavings. Kwagiulth cannibal masks, large carvings and chests were placed on pedestals covered with cloth, sometimes patterned with designs or a neutral colour to blend with the wall. The masks or carvings on these stands were treated as sculptures, given the same reverential separation accorded three-dimensional work in western art galleries.

There appeared to be little concern in the installation for the separate cultural traditions with which these works were associated. In one of the galleries, centrally placed and hung high on the wall, was a carving of the mythical creature called Siseutl, the double-headed sea serpent of the Kwagiulth people. Below this work, and positioned on a pedestal, was a finely-worked cedar bear from Kispiox, one of the Tsimshian villages. On either side of the bear was an Emily Carr painting of a Haida coastal village on the Queen Charlotte Islands (fig. 26). It seemed as if the deciding factors determining the placement of the objects depended on size and formal qualities. With the paintings providing a context that encompassed a wide range of different locales, the result was a universalization of all the native objects as "Indian," and the geographical location as British Columbia.

The largest totem in the exhibition was an immense welcoming figure of a chief, fully fifteen feet high.<sup>57</sup> His extremely long arms, articulated at the shoulders and wrists, were outstretched on either side, with the hands resting on the heads of two flanking grizzly bear houseposts, also carved of cedar. Acquired from a chief's house in Bella Coola by Harlan I. Smith for the museum's collection, this work would have provided the non-native artists with an example of the dramatic impact that could be achieved through sculptural distortion and simplification. Yet this work



(figs. 19, 20, 21) that dominated the large gallery was dismissed in the catalogue description as using the "grotesque" style.

There were also several of the distinctive Chilkat robes, woven from cedar bark and mountain goat hair. These ceremonial dancing robes bore the special symbols and patterns of the family for which each was made, and were highly-prized by the museums.

The vivid red, blue and black Tsimshian button blankets were also hung on the walls (figs. 22r, 22 l.) to display the crest animals on the back, but there was no indication that these images represented personal cultural property, or that the robes played an important role in the designation of status and rights of the wearer within a complex social system. In Carr's appropriation and interpretation of these crest figures for her own use on the hooked rugs and pottery that she produced for a source of income, the privileged significance of the imagery was lost.<sup>58</sup> But Carr's commercial crafts were exactly what Barbeau and the museum scientists were looking for in their design program that sought ways to use native motifs on products for everyday use.

Carr had made handbuilt, unglazed pottery since 1924, and had exhibited and sold a large number of pieces through the efforts of her friend Mrs. Kate Mather.<sup>59</sup> The objects Carr turned out, such as ashtrays, candlesticks, dishes, jugs and lampstands, were low-fired in a kiln she had constructed herself, and then painted with native designs that would fit the forms. There were many inaccuracies in her adaptation of the formline, and there was sometimes an inappropriate placement of symbolic figures, but the pottery sold well in craft outlets in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Banff.

Carr did not value her pottery and called them "stupid objects, the kind that tourists pick up," but she was nevertheless convinced that she was "keeping the Indian designs pure,"<sup>60</sup> and since she had used the imagery on a western craft in the case of the rugs and pottery, she had filled one of the major premises on which the exhibition was based. Carr had also provided a possible link between the native culture and the commercial world, and indicated ways the designs could be used. The addition of Carr's decorated rugs (figs. 22, 23) and pottery to the exhibition could be perceived at a superficial level to be a parallel to the decoration on the native objects, but in the native culture, the decoration was integral to the object, to its owner and to its cultural traditions, from the huge Haida canoe in the large gallery (fig. 19) with its symbols of the Grizzly-Bear-of-the-Sea, the Finback whale and the Raven, to the jewellery and utensils in the museum cases. In the appropriation process, the crests and animal figures were separated from their original function to enter the western institution of art and design with its different value system.

Carr's description of the opening on 2 December begins with high excitement that turns quickly to disappointment. Because of a mix-up over the invitations, only the officials in the government departments in the museum building and a few artists had received them on time. According to Carr, the invitations had been Brown's responsibility, and Barbeau was furious since they had been sent out too late and only a few people came. Carr felt humiliated. In her journal, Carr calls the opening "a dead, dismal failure"<sup>61</sup> and that she did not look forward to telling those at home in Victoria about the event, and to have "to admit it was a fizzle."<sup>62</sup> She wandered through the exhibit and wrote her impressions three days later in Hundreds and Thousands:

*The big rooms with the pictures hanging in the soft, pleasant light were almost empty. The grand old totems with their grave stern faces gazed tensely ahead alongside Kihn's gay-blanketed Indians with their blind eyes. I was glad they were blind. They could not see the humiliation.*<sup>63</sup>

The press were there, however, not only from Ottawa but from Toronto. The opening was reviewed in the 3 December issue of the Toronto Globe, and the experimental nature of the exhibition was mentioned, as well as the dominant position of white culture:

*History in Canadian art was made tonight when the exhibition of Canadian West Coast Indian Art, Native and Modern, opened at the National Gallery here. In this show are exhibited the best works of native craftsmen that could be found in the various museums throughout the country, together with a wide assortment of pictures by the best Canadian artists, showing what a tremendous influence the vanishing civilization of the West Coast Indian is having on the minds of Canadian artists.*<sup>64</sup>

The construct of the exhibition had now entered the realm of the public media. With its subsequent installation at the Art Gallery of Toronto in January and The Art Association in Montreal in February, the exhibition received a number of reviews and in the use of language some of the ideas Barbeau and Brown wished to place on its reception can be found. When Eric Brown suggested in an interview with the Toronto Globe that the native's "sense of creative design and high craftsmanship was at its best . . . deeply rooted in his national consciousness,"<sup>65</sup> it is most certainly a Canadian consciousness to which the gallery director was referring. The review goes on to say,

*Trade and commerce of the white man have changed the Indian and apparently driven from him the desire for self-expression revealed in the totem poles, masks, slate carvings, robes and rugs now so cherished. Perhaps the white leaders of today can do something to perpetuate the Indian's art, even though done by "mass production."*<sup>66</sup>

These last remarks sum up the utilitarian, paternalistic attitudes that underlay the exhibition's promotion and reception, and the rationale that justified control over the native artistic production.

Barbeau gave a number of lectures to the public on the native people while the exhibition was in Toronto. In one of these talks, Barbeau said the following:

*They do not believe in traditions any longer, . . . they do not, indeed, believe in themselves. They no longer believe in art for its own sake, as they once did. But nevertheless, their art is the finest inspiration on the American Continent, and is a heritage every lover of beauty must cherish.*<sup>67</sup>

He went on to say that the aboriginal people on the west coast had come from Asia between one thousand and two thousand years ago, a favourite theory of his. He also said that he had been able to trace the tribal migrations, again a part of his theory, which would explain the differences in the carving styles as well as social customs. He called the native art in the exhibition "without doubt prehistoric: that is, before the country was explored by the Russians . . ."<sup>68</sup> His other references to the native objects as "equal to the Aztecs" in their artistic quality, and "comparable to 'discovery with the figurative significance of a Canadian tomb of Tutankhamen'" are indicative of the ways that Barbeau was able to register in the public mind the place he had reserved for the native cultural material in the teleology of Canadian art history.

The concept of assimilation was accepted as national policy in the amendments to the Indian Act that were added to the legislation in the spring of 1927.<sup>69</sup> The incorporation of native art into the short history of Canadian art became part of that absorption, silencing questions concerning the parallel culture of the native people and their current status in the country. The exhibition firmly structured the curators'

concepts and marginalized ambivalences, and the native objects installed in the gallery were placed in the distant past as a fait accompli.

The historical positioning into an ahistorical limbo was one aspect of the rationalization based on cultural guilt. Presented as retrieval within the fields of ethnography and art history, and within the pragmatic value system of industrial design and tourism as its justification, the reconstitution of the native material culture into a number of different significations elided all original meaning. They became objects for others to possess and manipulate. Both curators used the native works for their own purposes, but for each of these men, and for the fourteen artists, the native culture had to be understood to be in the past in order to keep the present secure and ordered. The installation reflected this claim of authority, the display of cultural appropriation and power, and a sense of order and firm control over the irrationality of the "primitive other."

## Chapter Three

**CARR'S DILEMMA: MODERNISM OR MIMESIS?**

In the context of the exhibition Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, where they were surrounded by native objects and works by thirteen other non-native artists, Emily Carr's paintings, decorated pottery and hooked rugs could be rationalized and validated as part of a much larger enterprise. To the audience, and to Carr, it would appear from the evidence in the exhibition that there was a widespread appreciation of native artistic production among the Canadian cultural elite, especially since the presentation was a collaborative effort between the National Gallery and the National Museum, and some of the best-known artists in the country were participants. It is unlikely that Carr was aware of the implications of Barbeau's management of the exhibition, or of the myth he had constructed of white artists' concern for the native people and their culture in order to promote the museum's projects.

As it turned out, Carr was an admirable choice, for her work embodied concepts valued by each of the curators. Although her paintings were not as ethnologically accurate as Barbeau would have liked, he could certainly recognize her commitment to the native subject matter. Between 1907 and 1912, she had travelled to three of the major tribal areas<sup>1</sup> on her self-avowed "mission" to paint as many of the totem poles in their village settings as she could, and to produce a collection of works for posterity that would document the native cultural material before it disappeared.<sup>2</sup> By 1913, her oil paintings, watercolours and drawings with native subject matter numbered close of two hundred, a "preservation" praxis that formed a striking

parallel to the collection policies of the museum scientists. Her collection of paintings that painted works of art within works of art encompassed the poles and villages in a kind of psychic possession. In the process of translating the signification of the specific carved symbols into another culture's visual language, familiar in its syntax and procedures within western art practices, Carr redefined the meanings, and used strangeness to emphasize difference. Throughout her works, she had eliminated any elements that might disturb or subvert the myth that positioned native culture in the non-specific past. By thus "possessing" the signifier, she reconstructed and reconstituted the signification of the imagery.

To Eric Brown, Carr was clearly an artist with impressive academic credentials, having studied in San Francisco, London and Paris, and a painter who was able to bring a sophisticated "modern" interpretation to the native subject matter. He was not interested in the kind of apparent verisimilitude that was so valued by Barbeau in works such as those by Larry Kihn, and although Carr was convinced she had painted "for history and cold fact,"<sup>3</sup> Brown could see that her interpretations of the poles were profoundly affected by the ideas she had absorbed in France during her period of study between 1910-1911. There was an inconsistency between the demands of documentation that called for precise, scientifically reliable images of an observable external source, and the simplification and drive towards liberating the structures, forms and colours from their subject that Carr had learned in France. Within the constrictions of the identifying symbols, she sought a visual equivalent rather than a mimetic image.

Carr's claim that she had produced representations that were "absolutely truthful and exact"<sup>4</sup> should be considered in terms of her justification of this enterprise, since an examination of the works themselves reveals that perceptual changes took

place at each stage of the typically nineteenth century academic procedures she followed. In the field she made drawings and watercolour sketches, intended as preliminary studies in which she could include the iconographic details of the totems, as well as indicate the settings in which the poles were located. These sketches provided Carr with reference material for her final paintings which were completed in her studio, months, sometimes years, later. With each remove from the source, and further refinements of the material, the studio paintings were turned into autonomous works of art, with the interrelationships of the structural elements and the application of paint transforming the original ethnological information.

In the process of developing her field sketches into finished works in her Vancouver studio during the winter of 1912 - 1913, Carr added groups of human figures to enliven the static, architectural/landscape scenes. The suggestion had come from Dr. Charles F. Newcombe, who had been asked to evaluate Carr's collection on behalf of the provincial secretary and minister of education, Henry E. Young.<sup>5</sup>

Carr had heard that the provincial government was proposing to build a new Legislative Library, with an attached art gallery. She wanted to keep her collection together, but as there was no gallery in either Vancouver or Victoria that could house or display it, she wrote to Young in the fall of 1912, suggesting that these close to two hundred works would be a suitable acquisition because of their historical and ethnological value.<sup>6</sup> In Young's reply to Carr's letter, dated 7 November, 1912,<sup>7</sup> he implied that it would be some time before the proposed library would have an art gallery, but he did ask Newcombe to visit her studio and assess her paintings in terms of their ethnological documentation, and to send his report to Francis Kermode, the Provincial Museum's curator.



Dr. Charles F. Newcombe, a semi-retired doctor, had worked with Franz Boas and George Emmons, and held a long-term contract with the Field Museum of Chicago. He was not an academically-trained anthropologist, but was fascinated with natural history and had many years of experience in collecting for museums.<sup>8</sup> He knew what was expected in an ethnological representation.

In his estimation of Carr's work, Newcombe wrote in his report to Kermode that he found inaccuracies that made her representations unreliable as scientific records. He was searching for precise, descriptive imagery with correct proportions, appropriate scale and accurate colour. Instead he found Carr's work generalized and somewhat bewildering. He complained of the artistic liberties she had taken, and in referring to her gestural, painterly surface, said that "the materials used have been laid on with a heavy hand. On standing away several feet distance, the colours blend and the roughness . . . [is] . . . lost sight of."<sup>9</sup> He was upset with the arbitrary, unmeditated colours that he found "too brilliant and vivid to be true to the actual conditions," and the variations in scale that made it difficult to judge the comparative sizes of the totems depicted.<sup>10</sup> He also suggested Carr could correct these inaccuracies "under proper supervision."

When Carr followed Newcombe's suggestion to add human figures to the villages scenes, the consequence was a shift in emphasis away from what she had considered a closely-focused description of the carvings and decorated housefronts, to a more generalized interpretation of an integrated cultural setting. The compositional conventions she employed gave her final paintings a certain picturesque consistency and ambience, but, in the process, the poles and village buildings were cast as architectural background against which human interaction could take place. It is here that the disjunction can be found between Carr's

original intent of documentation, and the expectations of pictorial coherence dictated by academic art traditions.

Most of the material that Newcombe saw in Carr's studio in the early winter of 1912 had been produced that summer, and the finished paintings in the fall. Carr's momentous journey took her first to the Kwagiulth settlements on the eastern coast of Vancouver Island, and at Alert Bay she did a number of sketches that she later worked into oil paintings. One of these was called Alert Bay, West Coast, now titled Indian Village: Alert Bay (figs. 1, 24). The scene is formalized into a symmetrical composition, with three women seated on the ground as the central focus. To the left, towering above them, are two large bear totems, topped with thunderbirds, and painted in profile in order to emphasize the hooked beaks and snarling jaws. On the right, balancing these poles and providing a strong diagonal to the central figures, is the heavy triangular form of a sea-going canoe, supported by braces. In the background is a row of housefronts, their flat shapes interrupted by brightly-coloured clothing hanging on a line to dry. Even if the composition is contrived, Carr's bold handling of paint pushes the housefronts forward to the picture plane, collapsing the space and denying depth. The flat blocks of bright green, red, purple and yellow are in sharp contrast to the cream and blue-whites on the houses. The people seem to be surrounded by, perhaps locked into, their cultural materials in this almost claustrophobic painting.

° Another scene of Alert Bay's main street is found in Alert Bay, now titled Street, Alert Bay (fig. 3). Here the huge blackfish or killer whale pole placed in the middle ground on the left appears to be the most important totem, its distinctive black oval form in strong contrast to the housefront behind. This particular view of Alert Bay may have been constructed from separate sketches, since the pole's physical

relationship to the surrounding houses is not clearly defined. It appears the pole has been used as a form signifying the native culture, and to balance the figures on the lower right. Separating these two parts of the painting is a winding road, the main street in the village. Its linear perspective carries the eye back, but the shape is painted in flat, unmeditated colour, emphasizing the surface plane. The group of figures Carr has added on the lower right are crouched down by the side of the road. Arranged into overlapping blocks of intense colour, this decorative grouping is held in by contour lines to give a cloissionist effect, indicating Carr's familiarity with work such as that by Gauguin, as well as the techniques of art nouveau. It is clear in these paintings that many of the concepts Carr learned in France have given her a means of representation that was able to eliminate details, forms and delight in the independent energy created in her construction.

Carr visited a number of other villages, including Mimquimlees on Village Island. Carr's oil painting that she called Mamalicoola, West Coast (fig. 9) now has been renamed Memalilqua, Knight's Inlet, and features a long wooden staircase leading up from the beach to a house on the hill.<sup>11</sup> The flat plane of the housefront is decorated on the top edge with a carving of Siseutl, and another figure on the roof has radiating bars around its head that Carr called a "sunburst." This was another work that Carr changed from the watercolour sketch to the finished painting, adding figures in the foreground to "enliven" the scene.

In many of the other paintings interpreting the Kwagiulth villages, Carr uses similar procedures to generalize the forms and eliminate the details in order to bring an overall ambience to a fundamentally static subject. Included in the exhibition were images of Cape Mudge, Campbell River and Guyasdoms, a small village on Gilford Island. The two paintings of Guyasdoms illustrate the pictorial and

compositional issues with which Carr had to deal in bringing her examinations of housefronts and totems into the traditional formats acceptable to the institution of art.

In each case, Carr has added figures in the foreground that have altered the emphasis on the architecture. Guyasdoms, now called Old Village of Gwayasdums, and Guyasdoms, West Coast, B.C., presently entitled Old Indian House, Northern British Columbia, are images that present the housefronts as flat, planar shapes, pushing forward the foreground figures into a shallow stage. Without the figures, these shapes which deny the interest that the illusion of depth and other structures could provide are uncompromisingly frontal. By adding the figures, there is a gradation in terms of the entrance into the painting (fig. 7).

In the latter painting, Carr has formalized the composition into a symmetrical, centrally - focused structure. The strong verticality of the blackfish pole, the mouth of which opens as a doorway, is countered by the horizontal planes of the housefront and the band of bushes beside the doorway. Activating this setting are a group of native people who carry heavy packs of belongings as they return from the salmon canneries. These generic figures, constructed as simplified blocks of colour, are enclosed within a compositional triangle that lead up to the "mouth" of the doorway. Framed on either side by the broadly-painted forms of two canoes, this triangle lends a structural and psychological stability to the painting, but Carr's use of a geometric formalism also indicates a need to control these figures she has invented. Like an interlocking jigsaw puzzle, all the separate pieces fit into place, and only the intense colours have an independent energy and vigour.

From the Kwagiulth villages, Carr then travelled north to the Skeena River areas to paint the poles in the Tsimshian settlements. She had reached these villages

three years before Barbeau made his first field trip there in 1915,<sup>12</sup> and she found that most of the old poles were still there, erect in front of homes of the families that owned them. Her first stop was in Hazelton, one of the largest villages, and she must have produced a large number of works there for it was in that settlement that Anne Savage and Barbeau first saw four of her paintings in the summer of 1927.<sup>13</sup>

As well as sketching in Hazelton and the small village of Hagwelget at the juncture of the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers, Carr worked in Kitwanga, Kispiox and Kitsegukla. In her studio on her return, Carr produced a number of important canvases from these studies, including a large oil painting she called Gitsegyula Village, Skeena, which has now been titled Totem Poles, Kitsegukla (figs. 5, 20). The street scene is dominated by the tall, thin poles, many carved with protruding raven beaks. Carr's means of representation is rather inconsistent, as if she is struggling with the constrictions of documentation. Throughout the sky areas, she has used a free action, layering the canvas with short, broken brushstrokes to give a vibrating effect. These flecks of impasto in pink, violet and pale blue emphasize the surface and the medium's materiality. In contrast, the poles are treated as forms constricted by a linear description and painted with a smoother surface. Dr. Charles Newcombe would have found difficulty accepting Carr's descriptions of these crests, for she has not followed the formal structures closely.

In Kispayaks Village, known by its present title The Totem of the Bear and the Moon, Carr has observed the forms and structures of the pole and described it carefully, fulfilling the requirements of the museum scientists for a mimetic image. However, she has added vibrant, non-natural colours, including an acid green for the grass beside the totem. The base figure of a staring owl is painted a blue-

black, edged with red, and the grey cedar face and beak have streaks of the bright green,. At the top of the pole is a carving of a black bear, its face ringed with the moon symbol. Once again, Carr has added figures which add other strong colours and a sense of scale (fig. 8).

Throughout these canvases, Carr has eliminated specific references to any contact the native people may have had with the modern world. She has thus avoided the problematic position of relating her work to a specific historical time and revealing the actual social conditions on the reserves. Instead, her perceptual vision was filtered through her artistic practices with their accompanying value systems, and this process permitted her to produce stereotypical images of native life as an idyllic existence, close to nature and untroubled in its other time.

In projecting these kinds of idealized, romanticized images, Carr could choose, order and manipulate the visual information that was available, excising any aspects that would subvert or distract from the desired construct. The only reference in her autobiographical writings to the political tensions in the Skeena and Nass River regions during this period emerges when she is unable to go in 1912 to Kitwancool, the so-called "forbidden" village.<sup>14</sup> There is no evidence that she was aware of the disturbances over land claims, the strict regulation and enforced allotment of land into compounds for each family, under the Royal Commission of 1912, or of the anglicization of all the native place-names in the province in 1911. If she knew of these political and social issues and their profound effect on the native people, she gave no indication in her paintings. Although her works could be interpreted as images of resistance in their depictions of village life as passive and untroubled, her purpose was to "salvage" the poles through her paintings, not the people themselves.

Carr's last stop was the Queen Charlotte Islands where she visited Skidegate, Old Massett, Skedans and Yan, as well as some of the more remote villages.

From this part of her trip come three major works: Skedans, Queen Charlotte Islands, Yan, Queen Charlotte Islands (fig. 26) and a huge canvas called Tanu, Queen Charlotte Islands (center fig. 24). The first two paintings were installed as a pair in the installation as their compositions were similar wide sweeping vistas of the weathered poles along the beach. The painting of Tanu is much more particular in its detail of three poles, placed evenly across the canvas to face the viewer. In each of these works, Carr's confident paint handling is fully developed, and all signs of artifice and sentimentality have disappeared.

Some of Carr's paintings in the exhibition featured single poles, centrally-placed on a vertical canvas with no figures and little in the way of background. In some she included the whole pole; in others only the base figure, in order to focus close attention on the carving. Totem Pole, Skidegate, Queen Charlotte Islands, which is now titled Skidegate (fig. 11), is an image of a beaver, the base figure on a well-known pole in the village.<sup>15</sup> In the installation it was paired with another single pole canvas (fig. 25), and the two works bracketed together in the catalogue. Carr's treatment of the carving is changed in this work to emphasize the weight and tactility of the solid sculptural form, by modelling the figure in dramatic light and deep shadow. The details of the decorative surface are diminished in Carr's interpretation, as she concentrates on the expressive qualities of the facial distortions. Once again, it is apparent that Carr's painterly energy is held in check by the subject matter and the self-imposed documentary requirements, but to counter these restrictions, she took the opportunity to simplify and dramatize the essential form of the carving.

By contrast, in Skidgate Pole, now called Skidgate (fig. 10), Carr has layered the whole canvas with broken brushstrokes, giving a faceted texture that is vibrant with light. The single pole's form merges with the blues, greys and purple-browns of the atmosphere on the painterly surface, as Carr's concern with the formal interrelationships and the paint handling reinterprets the three-dimensionality of the carving.

In Carr's use of such a wide range of stylistic approaches, she was able to incorporate many of the artistic concepts and techniques she had learned in France, but the lack of consistency indicates she was searching for an effective means to represent the native subject matter. In her self-restriction to the processes of documentation, the identifying details and local colour had to be included, yet her pull to modernism entailed the abandonment of these specific references, a generalization of form and the use of expressive rather than descriptive colour. To deal with this pull in two directions, Carr seems to have taken an experimental stance, employing an energetic, free, gestural brushstroke in those areas where the particularities of ethnological information was not required.

Carr reworked many of her watercolour sketches into these finished oil paintings in her Vancouver studio during the winter of 1912-13, adding figures as Dr. Newcombe had suggested, refining the compositional structures and intensifying the colours. She held an exhibition of her complete collection in April, 1913, at Drummond Hall in downtown Vancouver. After the display, Carr felt rejected by what she believed to be a negative response from the public, moved back to Victoria, and closed her collection away.<sup>16</sup> It was to be fourteen years later, in 1927, that Eric Brown and Marius Barbeau could provide an exhibition context in which her works were valued. The curatorial and institutional constructs that formed the



ideological base for the exhibition gave her "mission" validity, her memorializing of the native material culture an artistic context that included thirteen other artists from across the country, and her acceptance by the cultural elite in central Canada.

Among that elite were professional artists who told her that she "had got the spirit of the country and the people more than the others who had been there."<sup>17</sup> The Toronto Star singled out her paintings in its review of the installation at the Art Gallery of Toronto when the exhibition travelled to that city in January, 1928:

*Most notable is the work of Emily Carr of Victoria, B.C. who gives many sketches of the majesty and charm of tutelary totem poles, guarding native villages.*<sup>18</sup>

In Montreal, reviewing the installation as it appeared at the Art Association of Montreal during February, 1928, the Gazette added some elaborations of its own:

*M. Emily Carr makes the largest contribution to the modern display. Miss Carr has spend many years among the Indians and has found their native arts not only a fertile source of inspiration for her own work, but has been responsible for a revival of these arts among the Indians. Her exhibits include some fascinating hooked-rugs and a collection of pottery from Indian designs and a number of brilliant paintings, which capture the colourful primitive spirit of the original Canada.*<sup>19</sup>

Emily Carr's acceptance by the Anglo-Canadian cultural elite and the praise she received from the press also represented the recognition of her stature as a Canadian artist whose enterprise matched that of the Group of Seven, in its "heroic" journeys into the wilderness and in its nationalist vision. The Group also realized that she had travelled north years before they had, and that, as a painter, she was familiar with modernist developments and the coded visual language associated with its experimentation. However, her inclusion of the native subject matter gave her paintings a certain kind of signification.

Carr's journeys to the native villages were parallel to a well-known pattern followed by artists in France since the mid-nineteenth century. For example, avant-garde artists Paul Gauguin and Emile Bernard had sought out what they perceived to be "primitive" and "exotic" subjects when they travelled to Brittany in 1888 to paint the Bretons and their landscape. Over the next few generations, hundreds of European and American artists, including Carr, Jackson and Holgate, also travelled to Brittany to paint the people and their rural settlements.<sup>20</sup> This process of bringing outside codes of representation to a marginalized culture was a way these artists could critique traditional modes of representation and, at the same time, define themselves in terms of the "Other."

However, as Griselda Pollock and Fred Orton have pointed out in their analysis of the French stereotype of the Breton peasants, representation of that which carries connotations of "remote, savage, primitive, rustic" is always problematic and involves separation from what is observed by expressing differences in relationship to the observer's perceived status.<sup>21</sup> By taking short trips into these kinds of surroundings with their "strange" aspects, the tourist artists could remain aloof from the culture and its social situation. Fundamental to these experiences is the return ticket.

This pattern had its parallel in the Canadian context. The vast boreal forests had always been considered "exotic" and "savage" and, in the case of Carr who included the native subject matter, her interpretations of this marginalized culture within the wilderness setting reaffirmed and naturalized their equation.

For the Group of Seven, the myth of the artistic journey that finds inspiration from nature became the ethos supporting their exploration of the wilderness landscape through their canvases, and by 1927 had been firmly identified with the cause of nationalism. Lawren Harris wrote in 1926,

*With us in Canada painting is the only art that so far has achieved a clear, native expression and so the forming distinctive attitude, the creative direction of the genius of our people and their higher aspirations are to be detected in it. Indeed a new vision is coming into art in Canada. It is a direct effect of the interplay of capacity and environment and moves into manipulation straight through the muddle of perishable imported notions . . . . We are in the fringe of the great North and its living whiteness, its loneliness and replenishment, its resignations and release, its call and answer--its cleansing rhythms.*<sup>22</sup>

It was from this "great North" that the Group found their iconography of natural forms, and Carr was stunned when she first saw their powerful imagery in Toronto, two weeks before the opening of the exhibition in Ottawa. She had stopped off to visit their studios and to see their work, and Harris' paintings in particular affected her profoundly. In her journals she wrote that he had painted

*a world stripped of earthiness, shorn of fretting details, purged, purified; a naked soul, pure and unashamed: lovely spaces with wonderful serenity.*<sup>23</sup>

This confrontation with some of the most sophisticated modernist painting in Canada at the time opened up the possibilities for a future direction for her own work. Harris offered her not only friendship and professional guidance, but the support of a group of artists committed to Canadian art who had achieved national fame. He presented to her the prospect of joining what was presented as an internationalist avant-garde, of which he considered himself a member, and his ideas and influence were to have a lasting effect on her career.<sup>24</sup>

But Carr could not ignore the high praise she had received for her paintings of native totem poles and villages. Through the exhibition, her extensive travels and her commitment to memorializing the native material culture in her art had been validated and given a context. She also saw that the non-native artists appeared to form a like-minded group that was interested in native culture, and that her paintings compared favourably with theirs. It was the native subject matter that had brought her great success and recognition. It seemed that Brown and Barbeau had encouraged her to continue in this direction, just by including her in the exhibition, and by March, when the exhibition was installed in Montreal, Carr was already planning another trip to the northern villages.

Barbeau urged her on, and wrote to her through the winter of 1927-28, sending her newspaper clippings about the exhibition and keeping her informed on public response to her work. He also offered to act as her agent in the east, by arranging small exhibits of the remaining paintings that she had sent the previous September, and were still in storage at the National Gallery. He also suggested he could sell her rugs and pottery.

Barbeau had a vested interest in keeping Carr's enthusiasm alive, for he had not quite finished his research in the Skeena River area. He bought her painting called Kispayaks Village, better known as The Totem Pole of the Bear and the Moon, and used a reproduction of it in his book The Downfall of Temlaham. It was to be published in July, 1928, and Carr's proposed trip in the summer would give him further publicity. His interest in Carr as a painter was genuine, but he could see the opportunities for himself in selling her work and supporting her endeavours.

In February, 1928, Carr wrote to Barbeau to thank him for a book he had sent her called Native Races of Canada.<sup>25</sup> He responded with more encouragement,

telling her he was trying to contact the Southam newspaper publishers to see if they would buy her collection of paintings, as they had done with Larry Kihn's works.

Barbeau wrote Carr again on 14 April to say that the National Museum would not buy the eight totem paintings he had proposed to them, as the works were considered by the other museum scientists to be too much like art. As Barbeau put it,

*I somewhat hoped that they would buy them as ethnological records, but we have to deal here with puritans who are very suspicious of anything that has any contact with art and I am afraid that your pictures went down on account of that possible blemish.<sup>26</sup>*

In this statement, Barbeau points out the ambiguous nature of Carr's work and its resistance to categorization. He went on to bring her up-to-date on his efforts to sell her collection to the Southam publishers:

*It took more than a year and a half to get the Kihn purchase through for \$3,500. Mr. Southam first purchased only for \$500 and then he came across with the rest over a year later.<sup>27</sup>*

Barbeau did manage to sell some her work for her in the east, and made sure she received the money she was owed. It must have appeared to Carr that Barbeau was looking out for her interests in every way he could.

Eric Brown was also concerned about Carr, although he likely had identified her as a regional painter, only interested in the native subject matter. In March, 1928, the Canadian Annual Exhibition was due to be held at the National Gallery, and Brown took the opportunity to hang some of Carr's works. Her oil paintings were still on tour with Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, so Brown selected some of her watercolours that had been kept in the National Gallery storage and entered them on her behalf. The board of trustees bought three for the National

Gallery's permanent collection: Tanoo, Gitwangak and Albert Bay. The first of these was incorrectly titled and was, in fact, a depiction of an eagle housepost she had seen at Tsatsinuchomi, near Alert Bay, perhaps evidence of the problems that can arise when a work is completed away from the locale and the experience.<sup>28</sup> It was to be another nine years before any more of Carr's paintings would come into the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Canada, but Brown's support of her work in 1928 and the other sales of her pottery and rugs must have reinforced the seductive pull to continue with the native subject matter. She had been caught up in the exhibition's afterglow, by Barbeau's and Brown's activities on her behalf, and by the dangling carrot of a sale of her collection. It is unlikely that she realized the ironies in the exhibition or that the "movement" of which Barbeau spoke was largely in his own imagination. However, it was probably Barbeau's support and the prospect of enlarging her collection that directed her imagery the following summer to even more photographic representation.

The trip she undertook in 1928 was a profound disappointment in that nearly all the poles were gone, taken by museums or "restored" by the museum scientists by fixing them into concrete bases near the railway lines and painting them with gaudy colours for the tourists. The full consequences of the exhibition and the museum policies came home to her.<sup>29</sup> Barbeau had finished with his collecting in the Skeena River area, and in the villages she visited, there was little left. Barbeau could not sell her collection to the Southam Brothers, and the thirty studio watercolours she did complete after her trip remained unsold as well.<sup>30</sup>

In September, 1928, the American artist Mark Tobey arrived in Victoria to conduct a number of painting workshops which Carr attended. In her journal two years later, she commented on the advice he had given her during those classes:

*He told me to pep my work up and get off the monotone, even exaggerate light and shade, to watch rhythmic relations and reversals of detail . . . .*<sup>31</sup>

Carr's subsequent exploration of a more vital and dramatic visual language led to a different emphasis in her interpretation of native subject matter. Her earlier focus on the specific documentary details that were evident in her 1912 paintings was replaced by formal and expressionistic concerns: to integrate the underlying structural forms of the totems with those of the landscape, and to find an expressive means of representation that could encompass her own response to the native cultural material.

The exhibition Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern represented a turning point in Emily Carr's career. Within its context, her work was given value by the Group of Seven, and especially Lawren Harris, by the intellectual and artistic elite who held patriarchal power over cultural developments in the country, and by the museum scientists, especially Marius Barbeau, who saw her work as important to the museum's larger enterprises. Her paintings reaffirmed the myths built around the native people and their culture, and became part of the "redemption" of the native objects as "art" in the gallery setting.

With thirteen other non-native artists, Carr had fulfilled the required mystical, artistic journey into the northern wilderness, that would enable their works to be included in the formulation of a distinctly Canadian art based on the landscape. The inclusion of the native subject matter was seen as an aspect of the wilderness and represented the "Other" against which these artists could define themselves and their art.

For Emily Carr, this opportunity changed her life; for the two curators, Eric Brown and Marius Barbeau, the paintings, pottery and rugs by this woman artist from Victoria filled out and naturalized their collaborative exhibition. For the native people, there was only silence. Others spoke for them, and their alternate discourse remained unheard.



## CONCLUSION

In art historical writings, the exhibition Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern has been relegated to the sidelines, in order to celebrate the achievements of Emily Carr and the turning point that her inclusion in the presentation represented in her career. Even Carr herself did not fully recognize the exhibition's significance, or its ironies. In her journal, Hundreds and Thousands, Carr concentrates on her own experiences with the Group of Seven in Toronto, calling the opening of the exhibition at the National Gallery a failure, and because of Carr's dismissal of the event, there has been no estimation of its importance or how her work functioned within its experimental premise.

The examination of an exhibition can be rather like lifting the lid on Pandora's Box. Behind the visual event itself are all the internal machinations to promote certain ideological positions through the choice of works and the installation program. As a result, an exhibition is never neutral; nor is it what it seems. In this presentation, the curatorial statements suggest that the juxtaposition of native artistic production with paintings by "modern" non-native artists was for comparative purposes, in order to find what relationships might exist between them. These artistic concerns put forward by the National Gallery and the National Museum, were a pretext and disguise for the underlying socio-political issues of nationalism, self-definition and the conscious formulation of a distinctly "Canadian" culture that would encompass the native art, but only as a "primitive" stage in the constructed field of Canadian art history.

The rationalization behind the exhibition was built on an artificial theory that carried a number of ramifications. As Marius Barbeau's career as an ethnologist was based on his research of the Skeena River area, it was in his interests to focus attention on the projects underway there. He promoted the idea that there was an intense and widespread interest in the native way of life and their artistic production among Canadian artists, and that a "movement" was being generated to record the native totem poles and villages through works of art by non-native artists, as a kind of parallel "salvage" operation to that of the museum scientists. Perhaps it was his contact with Larry Kihn that had inspired the idea, for the young American was working on portraits of the native people through the benefit of commissions from the railway companies and the National Museum. Barbeau's use of Kihn's works to illustrate both professional and popular publications may have led him to believe there were other artists empathetic to the native people. In 1926 when he formulated the idea for the exhibition, he did not know of Carr's "mission," but when her works were included in the exhibition's final listing, he could then say his imagined premise had been verified and fulfilled.

Barbeau understood the importance of visual imagery and the proven iconic power of the Group of Seven paintings. By encouraging artists to journey to the British Columbia wilderness and paint images of the native villages and totems, he knew the resulting works of art could be exhibited as reenforcing the connections between ethnology and art, using the success of one to bring attention to the other. He also knew he could give his books on the Skeena area a certain authority and increase their popularity by including images of the villages by well-known painters.

Barbeau's manipulations in arranging for six artists to go to the Skeena River area fed into a wider governmental scheme. That project was the promotion of

tourism to coincide with the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway line of the Canadian National Railway. This line began in Edmonton and was laid down beside the Skeena River and on to Prince Rupert on the coast, with stops in some of the Skeena villages such as Kitwanga and Kitselas. The Totem Pole Restoration project was ostensibly to provide protection for the poles in the villages, but was closely tied in with tourism aspirations, and was financed with the collaboration and support of the railway officials and the scientists at the National Museum.

Another program underway at the museum connected the exhibition with a wider network of influence that extended across the country through educational, industrial and commercial interests. Barbeau and Brown had brought the native objects into the National Gallery exhibition spaces for a purpose that was both utilitarian and pragmatic. The native artistic production was to be "redeemed" as a part of Canadian art history, and to be seen as an available source for decorative design motifs that could be used for the production of manufactured and industrial products, made entirely in Canada. Art and nationalism were now to be connected with economic revival.<sup>1</sup> In the process, this parallel program to the successful project initiated by the American Museum of Natural History completely commodified the native objects; their intrinsic meanings were annulled and their place in cultural history eliminated.

The 1927 exhibition Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern was about the power and control exerted by white Anglo-Canadian society over the culture of the indigenous people, and their assumption of the right to manipulate the material culture of the colonized "Other" in any way they wished.

In his discussion of the practice of writing about culture, James Clifford makes the following comments that could apply equally well to the efforts of the non-native artists in the exhibition:

*'Cultures' do not hold still for their portraits. Attempts to make them do so always involve simplification and exclusion, selection of a temporal focus, the construction of a particular self-other relationship, and the imposition or negotiation of a power relationship.<sup>2</sup>*

By romanticizing the way of life of the native people, the non-native artists were attempting to paint a cultural portrait that was fixed in the past. At the same time, by filtering their perceptions of the subject matter through the practices and conventions of western art traditions, these fourteen artists, including Carr, were engaged in defining what Clifford calls a "self-other relationship."

Within the context of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, Emily Carr's twenty-six paintings, hooked rugs and decorated pottery took on new meaning as part of a wider enterprise involving other professional artists and two national cultural institutions. However, the exhibition's experimental premise and "redemptive" purpose served to mask the vested interests behind its organization. Carr's works and those of the other non-native artists were caught up in a presentation that embodied the ideological positions of the curators and the two institutions with regard to the aboriginal people and their material culture. Those positions were established for the comfort and benefit of the dominant culture. Any alternative discourse the aboriginal people could have provided remained unheard.

## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 67.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid., p. 86.
- 4 Ramsay Cook, Canada, Quebec and the Uses of Nationalism (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986): 124-133. Cook sees 1926 as a year of major change for Canada, with the renewed mandate of the Liberal Party under Mackenzie King and the signing of the Balfour Declaration that recognized the dominions of the British Commonwealth as separate nations.
- 5 Mary Vipond, "The Nationalist Network: English Canada's Intellectuals and Artists in the 1920s," Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism 7 (January 1980): 32-52.
- 6 Paul Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1990), p. 92.
- 7 Allan Fletcher, Industrial Algoma and the Myth of Wilderness: Algoma Landscapes and the Emergence of the Group of Seven, 1918-1920, M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1989. Fletcher estimates that the "core aristocracy" numbered about forty people, and included Sir Edmund Walker, the Group of Seven and Marius Barbeau.
- 8 See Ann Davis, "The Wembley Controversy in Canadian Art," Canadian Historical Review 54 (March 1973): 48-74; and Maud F. Brown, Breaking Barriers: Eric Brown and the National Gallery, Port Hope, Ont.: Society for Art Publications, 1964 for discussions of the controversies surrounding Eric Brown's support of the Group of Seven and their work.
- 9 A.Y. Jackson was particularly vehement in his condemnation of Canadian artistic taste for nineteenth century Dutch landscapes. See Barry Lord, The History of Painting in Canada: Towards People's Art (Toronto: N.C. Press, 1974), p. 115.
- 10 Jeremy Adamson, Lawren S. Harris: Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes 1906-1930 (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1978), p. 137.

- 11 Lawren S. Harris, "Winning a Canadian Background," The Canadian Bookman 5 (February 1923), p. 37.
- 12 Edward Said, Orientalism, especially Chapter 1.
- 13 Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," Mythologies, New York: Hill and Wang, 1972.
- 14 James Clifford and George Marcus eds., Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography, Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986; James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- 15 Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage, Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1985.
- 16 Elizabeth Hunter, "The National Museum and the Promotion of 'Canadian' Art," paper presented to the annual meeting of the Universities Art Association of Canada, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 13 November 1987; and Victoria Wyatt, "Totem Poles in St. Louis: Transporting Alaskan Totem Poles to the St. Louis World Exposition of 1904," paper presented at a conference on Transportation in Alaska's Past, Fairbanks, Alaska, 15 October 1981.

## CHAPTER ONE

### NATIONALISM, APPROPRIATION AND THE INSTITUTIONAL ROLE

- 1 See Maria Tippet, "Who 'Discovered' Emily Carr?" Journal of Canadian Art History 1 (Fall 1974): 30-35.
- 2 Emily Carr wrote of her meeting with members of the Group of Seven in her journals Hundreds and Thousands (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1966), pp. 3-8.
- 3 Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum," Art History 3 (December 1980), p. 450.
- 4 Ibid., p. 455. In this article Duncan and Wallach indicate the importance of the museum or gallery architectural surroundings and installation program on the viewer's experience of an exhibition.

- 5 Said, Orientalism, especially Chapter 2: 113-197.
  
- 6 As will be discussed in Chapter Two, Marius Barbeau's first concept of the exhibition was to include the paintings of American artist W. Langdon Kihn with the native objects. A letter from H. Mortimer-Lamb concerning Emily Carr's paintings had been received by Eric Brown in 1921, but, as of December 1926, neither Brown nor Barbeau had seen her work.
  
- 7 Eric Brown, Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, exhibition catalogue, (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1927), p. 2.
  
- 8 In the literature there seems to be some confusion regarding the date of the opening. Maria Tippet uses 5 December 1927 which corresponds with Carr's entry in her journal. The National Gallery records show 20 November 1927, which was the original date on their schedule. However, the opening was put back to 2 December 1927, as verified by press reviews in the Ottawa Evening Citizen and the Toronto Star for 3 December 1927.
  
- 9 See figs. 19, 20 and 21 for installation of large gallery.
  
- 10 See No. 112 "Slate Carvings" in the exhibition catalogue, Appendix, p. 134. Prisoners taken in battle were often made slaves by the victorious group.
  
- 11 Frederick Bell-Smith's canvas was titled Mists and Glaciers of the Selkirks (1911), and was acquired by the National Gallery in 1912.
  
- 12 Peter Bürger, Theory of the Avant-Garde (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1984), p. 22.
  
- 13 Marius Barbeau, Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, pp.3-4. In Barbeau's essay, he quotes from M. Thiebault-Sisson's introduction to the Exposition d'art canadien, held in the Musée du Jeu de Paume, Paris, from 10 April - 10 May 1927. In this exhibition of paintings, organized by Eric Brown and the National Gallery, eleven native objects were also included at the request of the French Ministry of Fine Arts and placed in a separate section called "Decorative Arts." See Chapter Two, fn. 1.
  
- 14 Barbeau, Canadian West Coast Art, p. 4.

- 15 Ibid., p. 130. Barbeau contended that the native people came from Asia over the Bering Strait land bridge between one and two thousand years ago. Recent archaeological investigations have shown settlements that reach back at least 10,000 years in the British Columbia area.
  
- 16 See Suzanne Zeller, Inventing Canada, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987. This study of the scientific explorations of Canada in the nineteenth century includes a discussion of the Geological Survey and the attitudes to the land that eventually became part of the National Museum's position.
  
- 17 National Gallery of Canada, Annual Report for 1921-22 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1922), p. 7.
  
- 18 See Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences, New York: Pantheon, 1972. Foucault examines the structures and systems used in classifying knowledge and the importance of language in categorizing ideas.
  
- 19 Franz Boas, "Some Principles of Museum Administration," Science 25 (1907), p. 928. See also Merwyn Garbarino, Sociocultural Theory in Anthropology (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 48-49.
  
- 20 Wilson Duff, The Impact of the White Man, Vol. 1, The Indian History of British Columbia, Anthropology in British Columbia, Memoir 5 (Victoria: Provincial Museum of British Columbia, 1964): 38-39.
  
- 21 Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage, pp. 248-249.
  
- 22 Ibid., p. 271.
  
- 23 Ira Jacknis, "Franz Boas and Exhibits: On the Limitations of the Museum Method of Anthropology," Objects and Others ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985): 75-111. Jacknis examines Boas' influence on the presentation of exhibits in the American Museum of Natural History, the techniques he used and their effect on collection practices. See also Cole, Captured Heritage Chapter 6, pp. 141-164.
  
- 24 Ralph Maud, A Guide to B.C. Indian Myth and Legend (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1982), p. 109. Maud tells of the exchange of letters between R.W. Brock of the Geological Survey and Franz Boas when Brock was trying to find a head for the new division in anthropology. Boas replied: "Much to my regret, I cannot think of



any Canadian whose experience and knowledge would justify recommendation." Edward Sapir had worked with Boas at Columbia University.

- 25 Nansi Swayze, The Man Hunters: Famous Canadian Anthropologists (Toronto: Clarke Irwin and Co. Ltd., 1960), p. 108.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid., p. 11. The letter of recommendation was from Sir Edmund Osler, the well-known Canadian physician, whom Barbeau had met in Oxford, England.
- 28 Biographer Maria Tippettt refers to Emily Carr using the expression "a passing race" with reference to the native people and their culture. See Maria Tippettt, Emily Carr: A Biography (Toronto/New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 114.
- 29 Garbarino, Sociocultural Theory, pp. 28-31.
- 30 Carl Berger, "True North Strong and Free," Nationalism in Canada ed. Peter Russell (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1966): 3-26. In the early part of this century, one of the myths underlying Canadian nationalism was that the white northern race was superior to all others, and therefore should dominate the "lower races." Berger describes these racial attitudes.
- 31 Diamond Jenness, The Indians of Canada, National Museum of Canada Bulletin 65:16 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1932; reprint ed., Toronto/Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 35. Diamond Jenness was from New Zealand and had studied anthropology with Barbeau at Oxford University. He became head of the anthropology division of the National Museum in Ottawa after Edward Sapir's retirement in 1926.
- 32 Hal Foster, Recordings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics (Port Townsend, Wash: Bay Press, 1985), p. 182.
- 33 See, for example, Elizabeth A. Williams, "Art and Artifact at the Trocadero," Objects and Others, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985): 146-166.
- 34 Marius Barbeau, Indian Days in the Canadian Rockies, Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1923.

- 35 Gregory J. Edwards and Grant T. Edwards, "Langdon Kihn: Indian Portrait Artist," The Beaver (Winter 1984/85), p. 5. This trip taken by Kihn and Barbeau to document the Tsimshian poles is discussed later in this chapter on pages - 40-41. Kitwancool is a village in the Skeena River area of the northern British Columbia that Emily Carr visited in the summer of 1928 and described in her book Klee Wyck (Toronto/Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin and Co. Ltd., 1941), pp. 97-108.
- 36 The other twenty were bought by Sir Henry Wellcome and are now in the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in London, England.
- 37 National Museum of Canada, Annual Report for 1926, Bulletin 50 Department of Mines (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1928), p. 6.
- 38 Cole, Captured Heritage, p. 123.
- 39 Ibid., p. 132.
- 40 Ibid., p. 124. This extravaganza in the center of Chicago was the largest exposition that had ever been assembled and included African, Melanesian, Inuit, Japanese and Chinese exhibits, as well as displays of objects from many of the North American tribal groups. There is a photograph of this model Haida village in Cole, p. 124.
- 41 "Art in a Natural History Museum," American Museum Journal 3:3 (March 1913), p. 99. This article mentions three artists who had worked on the plan of mural decorations: F.W. Stokes, Will S. Taylor and E.W. Deming.
- 42 Ibid., p. 101.
- 43 See Maud Brown, Breaking Barriers for details of Eric Brown's early life.
- 44 See, for example, Clive Bell, Art, London: Chatto and Windus, 1914; reprint 1928. This book was of particular interest to a number of central Canadian artists, including the Group of Seven. Lawren Harris suggested to Carr that it would be a useful book for her to read, and she was able to buy a copy before she left Toronto for Victoria after the exhibition.

- 45 National Gallery of Canada, Annual Report for 1923-24 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1924), p. 6.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Ibid., p. 7.
- 48 Vipond, "The Nationalist Network," p. 44.
- 49 Ibid. Another analysis of the interlocking systems in the cultural network can be found in John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985), pp. 158-192. It is interesting to note that in this text on the history of Canada, there are only two sentences about the native people, and then only dealing with population numbers. See also Claude T. Bissell, The Young Vincent Massey, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.
- 50 National Museum of Canada, Annual Report for 1926, p. 39.
- 51 Ibid., p. 48. This annual report was the first to be published by the National Museum of Canada and contains a history of the Geological Survey and the development of the museum. One of the main concerns was for space and the difficulties in exhibiting the vast collection that had accumulated since the 1840's.
- 52 According to this annual report, the yearly expenditures of the two divisions was about \$65,000.
- 53 National Gallery of Canada, Annual Report for 1920-21 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1921), p. 15.
- 54 Ibid., p. 7.
- 55 Ibid., p. 13.
- 56 Harlan I. Smith, "Prehistoric Canadian Art as a Source of Distinctive Design," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada 12:3 (May 1918), p. 152.

- 57 Esther Coster, "Decorative Value of American Indian Art," American Museum Journal 16 (May 1916), p. 307. I am indebted to Elizabeth Hunter for bringing this article to my attention.
- 58 Smith, "Prehistoric Canadian Art," p. 153.
- 59 Brown, Canadian West Coast Art, p. 2.
- 60 Barbeau, Canadian West Coast Art, pp.3-4.
- 61 See, for example, Marius Barbeau, "Totem Poles: A Recent Native Art of the Northwest Coast of America," Geographical Review 2 (1930): 258-272; and Marius Barbeau, "Totemism, A Modern Growth on the North Pacific Coast," Journal of American Folklore 57 (1944): 51-58.
- 62 Barthes, "Myth Today," p. 114. As Barthes suggests in his description of the structure of myth, the signifier is emptied of meaning, leaving it open for colonization.
- 63 Cole, Captured Heritage, p. 268. Cole mentions that 1927 was a good year for Barbeau's entrepreneurial efforts in collecting objects since the salmon fishery had failed, and the natives were more willing to sell their carvings because they needed money.
- 64 The issue was introduced in Bill 66 in 1925 and incorporated into the Indian Act in the 1927 Amendments. See Sharon Venne ed., Indian Acts and Amendments 1868-1975: An Indexed Collection, Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan Native Law Centre, 1981.
- 65 Cole, Captured Heritage, p. 270.
- 66 Ibid., 271.
- 67 A close analysis of Duncan Campbell Scott's attitudes and policies can be found in Brian E. Titley's book A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986. His role in the 1927 hearings before a joint committee from the Senate and House of Commons on the land claims issue is discussed in Paul Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990), pp. 104-113.

68 Cole, Captured Heritage, p. 273.

69 Ibid., p. 275. Much of the suspicion was well-grounded. Members of the committee and the crew were critical of one another, especially of T.B. Campbell's insensitivity to the poles' aesthetic qualities. Rather than the government officials taking control over the process of restoration, it was left up to the railway crew and their managers.

70 Ibid., p. 277.

71 See Emily Carr, Growing Pains: The Autobiography of Emily Carr (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 320. Carr describes the effects of the "museum age" and tourism on the villages that she encountered on her second trip in the summer of 1928. She says that the native artist "was carving to please the tourist and to make money for himself, not to express the glory of his tribe." See also Carr's short story "Eagles of Skeena River" in The Heart of a Peacock (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1953): 59-61.

72 Michel Foucault's description of Bentham's Panopticon is relevant as a paradigm for these structures of power. See Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1975): 197-229.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE EXHIBITION: STRUCTURES, MYTHS AND AGENDAS

1. See Chapter One notes, fn. 13. The Exposition d'art canadien had been requested by the French Ministry of Fine Arts, after the critical success of the Canadian Section of Fine Arts in the British Empire Exhibitions of 1924 and 1925, held at Wembley, England. The basis of the 1927 exhibition in Paris was a selection of works from the 1925 exhibition, then on tour in England, a few paintings from the 1924 exhibition, and a large retrospective group of paintings by Tom Thomson and James Wilson Morrice. In the National Gallery of Canada Annual Report for 1927-28, Ottawa: King's Printer, 1928, Eric Brown included nine of the press reviews on the exhibition, printed in full. It was very much in his interest to indicate the positive response to Canadian art, including the Group of Seven's canvases, in both England and France. The reviews were from the following publications: Le Matin 12 April; Le Temps 12 April; Figaro 10 April; Le Figaro Artistique 5 May; Gaulois 10 April; Journal des Debats 11 April; Action Francaise 14 April; Le Journal des Arts 30 April; and the Chicago Tribune (Paris Edition) 28 April, all 1927.

2 Edwards and Edwards, "Langdon Kihn," p. 5.

- 3 Barbeau, Indian Days in the Canadian Rockies. This book was written to appeal to the general public, although it was based on scholarly research.
- 4 Edwards and Edwards, "Langdon Kihn," p. 6.
- 5 The name "Laelt" is also spelled "Lelt" which means "snake."
- 6 Leonard Richmond, "Indian Portraits of W. Langdon Kihn," The Studio 90 (December 1925), p. 340.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 W. Langdon Kihn, "The Gitksan on the Skeena," Scribner's Magazine 79 (February 1926), p. 170.
- 9 Ibid., p. 175
- 10 Richmond, "Indian Portraits of W. Langdon Kihn," p. 345.
- 11 Letter from Marius Barbeau to Dr. Alcock, Archives de Folklore, University of Laval, Quebec, 17 May 1950, Barbeau Papers, National Gallery Files.
- 12 See Naomi Jackson Groves, One Summer in Quebec, Kapuskasing: Penumbra Press, 1988. Barbeau had known Jackson as a close friend since 1921. They had travelled together and Jackson made many pen-and-ink drawings to illustrate Barbeau's books on Quebec. Barbeau writes of this trip and his search for early Quebec woodcarvings in Quebec, Where Ancient France Lingers, Quebec: Librairie Garneau, 1936. A.Y. Jackson's account is in A Painter's Country: The Autobiography of A.Y. Jackson, Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., 1958.
- 13 Dennis Reid, Edwin H. Holgate (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1976), p. 14.
- 14 Holgate's Totem Poles, Gitsegiuklas (1927) was purchased by the National Gallery for their permanent collection in 1939. A number of Holgate's prints from this trip are reproduced in the Glenbow Museum exhibition catalogue Images of the Land: Canadian Block Prints 1919-1945, essay by Patricia Ainslie, (Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1984), pp. 62, 134, 135.

- 15 A.Y. Jackson, A Painter's Country, p. 89.
- 16 Reid, Edwin H. Holgate, p. 14.
- 17 Marius Barbeau, Totem Poles of the Gitksan, Upper Skeena River, British Columbia, Bulletin 61, Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1929; and The Downfall of Temlaham, Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1928; reprint Edmonton: Hurting, 1973.
- 18 For background on this period and an account of the rebellion from a native point of view, see Maureen Cassidy, From Mountain to Mountain: A History of the Gitksan Village of Ans'payaxw, Kispix: Ans'payaxw School Society, 1984. Chapter 3 deals with the uprising and the story of Kitwancool Jim.
- 19 Christopher Varley, F.H. Varley (Edmonton: The Edmonton Art Gallery, 1981), p. 78.
- 20 Prospectus of the School of Decorative and Applied Arts 1925-26, Archives of Emily Carr College of Art and Design, Vancouver. As quoted in Christopher Varley, F.H. Varley, p. 78.
- 21 Maria Tippet and Douglas Cole, From Desolation to Splendour (Toronto/Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin and Co. Ltd., 1977), p. 53. There is a reproduction of Bell-Smith's painting on page 54.
- 22 See Anne McDougall's biography Anne Savage: The Story of a Canadian Painter, Montreal: Harvest House, 1977. This uncritical account of Savage's career discusses at some length the friendship between Savage and A.Y. Jackson. The Beaver Hall Hill Group is discussed in Charles Hill's Canadian Painting in the Thirties, exhibition catalogue (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1975), p. 95. The name of this group is usually shortened to "The Beaver Hall Group."
- 23 Brown, Breaking Barriers, p. 67. Maud Brown says Pegi Nichol "was like a very much younger sister, and our house was her second home." See also Hill, Canadian Painting in the Thirties, p. 95. Hill says the Nichol travelled with Barbeau to the Skeena in 1928, according to a letter from Brown to Carr, dated 8 October 1928, National Gallery Files.
- 24 Jackson, A Painter's Country, p. 151.

- 25 Rebecca Sisler, "Lives and Works of the Canadian Artists" - Florence Wyle. From U.B.C. Fine Arts Library Microfiche of National Gallery Clipping Service, n.p.
- 26 See fig. 18, Anne Savage, Hills on the Skeena River (1927).
- 27 See Glenbow Museum exhibition catalogue Images of the Land. This catalogue includes two reproductions of woodblock prints that W.J. Phillips made from watercolour paintings he did on the west coast during this trip in 1926. The prints reproduced are of two of the works in the 1927 exhibition: Jim King's Wharf, Albert Bay, B.C. (1927) and Karlukwees (1929). See also Michael J. Gribbon, Walter J. Phillips: A Selection of His Works and Thoughts, Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1978, which includes the working methods followed by this artist. The finished watercolours that Phillips contributed to the exhibition are in private collections.
- 28 Maria Tippet and Douglas Cole eds., Phillips in Print (Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society, 1982), pp. 18-23.
- 29 In Phillips' Mamalilicoola (see fig. 17) the side view of a row of house includes the same house Emily Carr painted in Mamalilicoola, West Coast (see fig. 9).
- 30 Tippet and Cole eds., Phillips in Print, p. 59.
- 31 These annual loan exhibitions were begun during the First World War when the National Gallery's space in the Victoria Memorial Museum was seconded by the government and there was no place to exhibit the permanent collection.
- 32 Letter from H. Mortimer-Lamb to Eric Brown 24 October 1921, Emily Carr Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Letter from Eric Brown to H. Mortimer-Lamb 23 November 1921, Emily Carr Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.
- 35 See National Gallery of Canada, Annual Report for 1920-21 (Ottawa: King's Printers, 1921), p. 14.



36 Brown to Mortimer-Lamb 23 November 1921.

37 See W. Wylie Thom, The Fine Arts in Vancouver 1886-1930, M.A. thesis for University of British Columbia Fine Arts Department, 1969. Chapter 9 discusses the reception in Vancouver to the National Gallery loan exhibitions and the hostility with which the work of the Group of Seven was greeted by the public. In 1922 paintings by Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer, J.E. H. MacDonald, and Fred Varley had been on view at the Vancouver exhibition, and Thom reports that the reviewer for the Vancouver Province described the "pictures sent from the East as shell-shocked productions." (p. 116) There was an even greater reaction against the all-Canadian exhibition sent in 1928, which included fourteen paintings by the Group of Seven.

38 This new program of holding an annual exhibition of Canadian art chosen from exhibitions held across the country was introduced in 1926 and announced in the annual report for that year.

39 Victoria Daily Colonist 14 September 1927. Mrs. Maud Brown also gave lectures on art history and the National Gallery.

40 Ibid.

41 Brown, Breaking Barriers, p. 103. Maud Brown describes the encounter with Emily Carr and their impressions of her work.

42 Tippet, Emily Carr, p. 141.

43 Letter from Marius Barbeau to Eric Brown 3 October 1927. Emily Carr Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid. Eric Brown's promotion of Pegi Nichol is evident here.

47 Letter from Emily Carr to Eric Brown n.d., Emily Carr Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.

- 48 Letter from Emily Carr to Eric Brown 28 September 1927, Emily Carr Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.
- 49 The exhibition opened at the Art Gallery of Toronto 6 January 1928, and was on view there until 29 January 1928. It opened at the Art Association of Montreal on 17 February 1928 and closed 25 March 1928.
- 50 Ottawa Evening Citizen 10 November 1927. This article features an interview with Marius Barbeau, and was titled "To Hold Unique Exhibition of Paintings and Handicrafts at National Gallery."
- 51 Letter from Emily Carr to Eric Brown 1 November 1927. Carr's letter to Brown included an autobiographical statement that emphasized the hardships she had encountered on their trips, and what she felt was a negative response to her work from the public. This letter is quoted in Tippet, Emily Carr, pp. 142-143.
- 52 Ottawa Evening Citizen, 10 November 1927.
- 53 Emily Carr, Hundreds and Thousands, pp. 9-12.
- 54 Ibid., p. 5.
- 55 Ibid., p. 9.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 In the Great Hall of the Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec, there is a replica of this carving in one-third scale.
- 58 There were four hooked rugs by Carr in the exhibition: a large finback whale rug, a raven rug with dark background, a double-headed eagle rug and a small finback whale rug.
- 59 See Tippet, Emily Carr, pp. 134-136 for a discussion of Carr's pottery.

- 60 Carr, Growing Pains, p. 311. Carr was convinced that she had started a trend of making pottery with native designs, but there were many women making similar work. See N. de Bertrand Lugin, "Women Potters and Indian Themes," Maclean's Magazine, 15 March 1927, p. 7.
- 61 Carr, Hundreds and Thousands, p. 11.
- 62 Ibid., p. 12.
- 63 Carr's entry in Hundreds and Thousands is dated 5 December 1927.
- 64 Toronto Globe, 3 December 1927.
- 65 Toronto Globe, 12 January 1928.
- 66 Ibid. The "mass production" referred to in this article was an appeal for the implementation of the museum's design program in the art schools and in industry. Other reviews about the exhibition appeared in the following publications: Ottawa Evening Citizen, 3 December 1927; Toronto Star, 9 January 1928; Toronto Mail and Empire, 11 January 1928; Victoria B.C. Colonist, 25 January 1928; Montreal Gazette, 12 February 1928; and the Montreal Daily Star, 1 March 1928. There were two promotional articles before the exhibition started: Ottawa Evening Citizen, 10 November 1927, and the Montreal Daily Star, 14 November 1927. There was also a review by David Leechman called "Native Canadian Art of the West Coast," The Studio (November 1928), pp. 331-333.
- 67 See "Carving of Totem Poles Made Thing of the Past by Christianity," Victoria B.C. Colonist 25 January 1928.
- 68 Ibid. In estimating the validity of Barbeau's theories and claims, it is important to refer to Wilson Duff's "Contributions of Marius Barbeau to West Coast Ethnology," Anthropologica 6:1 (1964): 63-96. Research since Barbeau's time has established the existence of native settlements in British Columbia dating back at least 10,000 years. See also Richard Inglis and George MacDonald, Skeena River Prehistory, Ottawa: National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Archaeological Survey of Canada, Paper No. 87, 1979.
- 69 See Venne, Indian Acts and Amendments.

## CHAPTER THREE

**CARR'S DILEMMA: MODERNISM OR MIMESIS?**

1. The three areas were those of the Kwagiulth, Tsimshian and Haida peoples.
- 2 Carr, Growing Pains, p. 283.
- 3 Carr, Hundreds and Thousands, entry for 14 November 1927, p. 5.
- 4 Emily Carr unpublished journals, Phyllis Inglis Collection of Emily Carr Papers, British Columbia Archives and Records Service, Victoria.
- 5 Tippet, Emily Carr, p. 112.
- 6 Letter from Emily Carr to Henry E. Young n.d., Curatorial Files, Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria.
- 7 Letter from Henry E. Young to Emily Carr 7 November 1912, Curatorial Files, Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria.
- 8 See Cole, Captured Heritage, pp. 165-209 for a full discussion of C.F. Newcombe's career and his involvement with Franz Boas and later the Field Museum in Chicago. Newcombe's serious ethnological collecting began around 1898, working in the field for the American Museum of Natural History and the University of Pennsylvania, as well as the Field Museum in Chicago and the Provincial Museum in Victoria.
- 9 Charles F. Newcombe, "Report on Miss Carr's Collection of Paintings of Indian Totem Poles," sent to Francis Kermode, curator of the Provincial Museum of British Columbia 13 January 1913, Curatorial Files, Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 According to Doris Shadbolt, the name of this village was actually "Mimquimlees" and Mamalilicoola" referred to the name of the people living on that part of Village Island. See Doris Shadbolt, The Art of Emily Carr (Toronto/Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin and Co. Ltd., 1979), p. 201.

- 12 Barbeau's first field trip was to Port Simpson from December 1914 to February 1915. After that year, none of the museum scientists was able to take field trips until the war was over as their funds were directed to the war effort.
  
- 13 See previous chapter, p. 62.
  
- 14 Kitwancool was forbidden only to non-natives. See James White, Handbook of Indians in Canada, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Ottawa: King's Printer, 1912.
  
- 15 In 1941-42 Emily Carr reworked this painting of the beaver pole at Skidegate on the Queen Charlotte Islands into a large oil on canvas called A Skidegate Beaver Pole, now in the collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery: No. 42.3.38.
  
- 16 Paula Blanchard, The Life of Emily Carr (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1987), pp. 135-137.
  
- 17 Carr, Hundreds and Thousands, entry for 13 December 1927, p. 17.
  
- 18 Toronto Star 9 January 1928.
  
- 19 Montreal Gazette 12 February 1928.
  
- 20 Jackson had sketched in Brittany, France, with Albert Robinson in 1911, the same year Carr was in France. Holgate travelled to the Breton village of Concarneau to sketch during the summer of 1921, not long after he had met James Wilson Morrice who had painted in that area as well. Holgate was accompanied by Robert Pilot, another Canadian abroad studying in France. While he was in Brittany, Holgate did a number of studies of the Breton peasants. Maria Tippet describes Carr's experiences in Concarneau where she studied with watercolour painter Frances Hodgkins of New Zealand. See Tippet, Emily Carr, pp. 93-96.
  
- 21 Fred Orton and Griselda Pollock, "Les Données Bretonnantes: La Prairie de la Representation," Modern Art and Modernism eds. Francis Francina and Charles Harrison (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 295.
  
- 22 Lawren Harris, "Revelation of Art in Canada," The Canadian Theosophist 7:5 (15 July 1926), p. 85.

23 Carr, Hundreds and Thousands, entry for 17 November 1927, p. 7.

24 Lawren Harris had been instrumental in bringing the International Exhibition of Modern Art to Toronto in the spring of 1927, a remarkable presentation assembled by the Société Anonyme that included works by some of the best-known avant-garde artists of the period. The exhibition was brought together through the efforts of Katherine Dreier and Marcel Duchamp and was first shown at the Brooklyn Museum from 19 November 1926 to 1 January 1927. Harris was the only Canadian artist represented. He certainly spoke to Carr about Dreier, who was one of the major patrons and collectors of modern art in the 1920s and 1930s. Carr did have the opportunity to meet Dreier when she visited New York in 1930.

25 Letter from Emily Carr to Marius Barbeau 2 February 1928, Barbeau Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.

26 Letter from Marius Barbeau to Emily Carr 14 April 1928, Barbeau Papers, National Gallery Files, Ottawa.

27 Ibid.

28 The watercolour painting Tanoo is now titled House Post, Tsatsisnukomi (1912). There is a companion painting to this work in the collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, titled Tsatsinuchomi, B.C. (1912): No. 42.3.88.

29 See Carr's autobiography Growing Pains, p. 320.

30 Shadbolt, The Art of Emily Carr, pp. 65-67. Included is the full text of the letter Carr wrote to Eric Brown after her return from her 1928 trip, dated 11 August 1928. Carr was obviously under the impression that Brown and the National Gallery were interested in the native subject matter since they had bought three of her watercolours with native villages and totems for the permanent collection.

31 Carr, Hundreds and Thousands, 24 November 1930, p. 21.

## CONCLUSION

- 1 See Vincent Massey, "Art and Nationality in Canada," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Appendix B. 24:3 (1930): 59-72. This speech given by Massey is particularly interesting in its attitudes to the ways art can be related to industry, science and the economic development of the country.
- 2 Clifford and Marcus eds., Writing Culture, p. 10.

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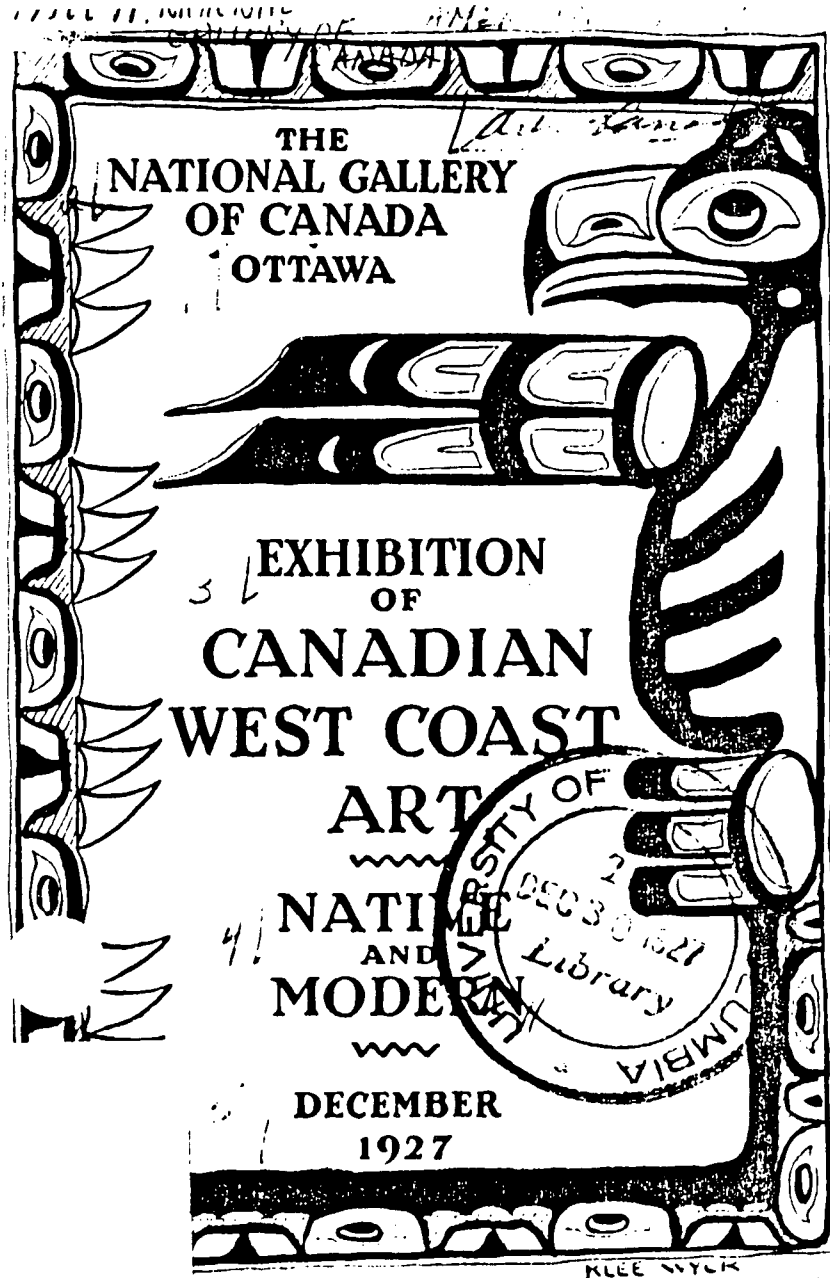
"To Hold Unique Exhibition of Paintings and Handicrafts at National Gallery." Ottawa Evening Citizen 10 November 1927.

APPENDIX

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

of

CANADIAN WEST COAST ART - NATIVE AND MODERN



EXHIBITION  
OF CANADIAN WEST COAST  
ART

DECEMBER  
1927

*Arranged in co-operation with the*  
NATIONAL MUSEUM, OTTAWA  
THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM, TORONTO  
MCGILL UNIVERSITY *and*  
THE ART ASSOCIATION, MONTREAL

THE  
NATIONAL GALLERY *of* CANADA  
OTTAWA

THE purpose of the Trustees of the National Gallery in arranging this exhibition of West Coast Indian Art combined with the work of a number of Canadian artists who, from the days of Paul Kane to the present day, have recorded their impressions of that region, is to mingle for the first time the art work of the Canadian West Coast tribes with that of our more sophisticated artists in an endeavour to analyse their relationships to one another, if such exist, and particularly to enable this primitive and interesting art to take a definite place as one of the most valuable of Canada's artistic productions.

The Indian sense of creative design and high craftsmanship was at its best as deeply rooted in his national consciousness as ever has been our sense of traditional art, and in his weapons, architecture, ornaments and utensils produced from the materials to his hand, we can see how ably and seriously he has held to them so long as his national consciousness and independence remained. The disappearance of these arts under the penetration of trade and civilization is more regrettable than can be imagined and it is of the utmost importance that every possible effort be made to retain and revivify whatever remnants still exist into a permanent production, however limited in quantity. Enough however remains of the old arts to provide an invaluable mine of decorative design which is available to the student for a host of different purposes and possessing for the Canadian artist in particular the unique quality of being entirely national in its origin and character.

That such use of it can be made can be clearly seen in the work of Miss Emily Carr, of Victoria, B.C., whose study of the country covers a long period of years, and whose pictures of it and designs translated into pottery, rugs and other objects, form one of the most interesting features of the exhibition.

The National Gallery takes this opportunity of expressing its warmest thanks to the National Museum, Ottawa, the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, The Art Association and McGill University, Montreal, whose generous co-operation have made the exhibition possible.

ERIC BROWN

### WEST COAST INDIAN ART

The decorative arts of the West Coast tribes of British Columbia have achieved world-wide fame. They are extensively represented in the state museums of Europe and America. And they favourably compare with the well-known aboriginal arts of Mexico, Africa and the South Seas. Thiebault-Sisson, the French art critic, wrote last year: "Between the specimens of Canadian West Coast art and those of the Bantus of Africa or of the ancient Aztecs of Mexico, there is an obvious analogy. They seem related to each other. Yet, the art of the Canadian tribes has advanced further than the others and discloses a much finer culture."

It is in their carvings, their paintings and their textiles, as illustrated in this exhibition, that the native artists manifest their amazing sense of decorative fitness and beauty. Their art was no idle pursuit for them or their tribesmen, but fulfilled an all-essential function in their everyday life. Their houses, ceremonial costumes, utensils and weapons had to be decorated in traditional style; and their heraldic emblems had to be displayed on their house fronts and their totem poles. This explains the extreme complexity of the art and its development among a people whose numbers were limited and whose life was beset by many hardships.

The style and contents of this native art varies from tribe to tribe. The North and the South stand in marked contrast. Their local traditions and aims differed. The skill of their craftsmen was hardly comparable. The Haidas, the Tsimshian and the Tlingit, to the north, were by far the best carvers and weavers. Their style was smooth, elaborate and refined. Their most accomplished artists have left works of art that count among the outstanding creations of mankind in the sphere of plastic or decorative beauty. The southern tribes, on the other hand (the Kwakiutl and Nootka), could not boast of like refinement. The beings they represent on their belongings often are monsters; their features are highly conventional and grotesque. When they depict animals, the contortions of the face and the body usually belong to caricature rather than sincere realism. This contrast between the northern and southern areas on the coast is fundamental, and it is based upon cultural differences between the racial and ancient

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EXHIBITION OF CANADIAN WEST COAST ART

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A commendable feature of this aboriginal art for us is that it is truly Canadian in its inspiration. It has sprung up wholly from the soil and the sea within our national boundaries. Grizzly bears, beavers, wolves, whales, salmon, seals, eagles and ravens constitute its most familiar themes. Cedar trees, walrus tusks, moose hides and mountain-goat hair serve as raw materials. And it is remarkable how skillfully the native artists have adapted their designs to the exacting nature of their materials, while striving to serve a public purpose that constantly stimulated their originality and taxed their creative talents to the utmost.

The Indian specimens displayed in this Exhibition mostly belong to the collections of the National Museum of Canada, the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology, the McGill University Museum and the Art Gallery of Montreal. They were collected from 1875 to the present day by students of West Coast ethnology, principally Dr. G. M. Dawson, whose McGill University collection is one of the most valuable—, C. F. Newcombe and Marius Barbeau.

MARIUS BARBEAU,  
National Museum,  
Ottawa.

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EXHIBITION OF CANADIAN WEST COAST ART

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**No. 100 CARVED HOUSE POLES**

These large carvings in grotesque style were corner posts inside semi-communal houses, among the Kwakiutl and the Bella-Coola tribes of the North West Coast. On the top of the smaller ones rested the large round beams supporting the slender roof poles. The larger pole with arms outstretched also stood inside the house, at the rear. They represented mythic ancestors, such as the supernatural human-like Raven, or the Grizzly-Bear; or again, monsters of the unseen world, one of the best-known of which was Komokoa, a mighty spirit of the ocean, ruler of the whales and seals, who once carried under the sea the owner of the pole and gave him his name and powers.

(National Museum of Canada. The Kwakiutl poles from the early collections. The Bella-Coola poles collected by H. T. Smith).

**No. 101 MODELS OF TOTEM POLES**

These miniature totem poles were carved to the likeness of the large poles which stood in numbers in the village of the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands, and represented the owner's coat-of-arms and ancestors. They are from the hand of consummate artists, many of whom practiced their art in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Their refined stylization coupled with a touch of feeling and realism, and the clever grouping of figures along the slender shafts, disclose the outstanding characteristics of Haida art at its best.

(National Museum. From the early collections).

**No. 102 DUG-OUT CANOE**

A Haida canoe hewn out of a single cedar trunk, and decorated with the painted crests of the owner: the Grizzly-bear-of-the-Sea and the Fin-back whale combined together, and the mythic Raven. The herring-bone adze pattern inside the dug-out discloses the maker's skill and patience, as also his pride in his remarkable achievement.

(National Museum. Gift of the Fishery Department).

## No. 103

## MASKS

The numerous masks of the North West Coast tribes were used in dramatic performances that were among the principal features of the lengthy winter festivals. The dancers or performers wearing them with appropriate costumes impersonated the spirits, monsters or ancestors whom they were meant to represent. Songs and dialogues were part of the dramatic action that accompanied their appearance in the feast house. Clever mechanism, such as hidden strings and springs, were often utilized to move the eyes, the jaw or the other features, thereby enhancing realism.

There are at least three kinds of masks; the first two, among the Tsimshyan and the Haidas, illustrate either the owner's personal name or one of his inherited family emblems. They are emblems when they show the features of the Wolf, the Eagle, the Raven, the Beaver, the Hawk, the Thunderbird. Most of the masks among the Tsimshyan represent traditional names, such as Throwing-stones, Wild-person, Snow-man, Wolverine, and a multitude of others. As both varieties belong to the northern nations, they are often from the hands of the best carvers. While they are usually realistic and often humorous, their characterization is most striking and effective, particularly when seen in its proper setting, near a blazing fire in the feast house, at night, in winter time.

The larger masks of a grotesque type, showing the Raven, the Bull-head fish and other monsters, belong to the Secret societies of the Kwakiutl and the Nootka. They are used in rituals wherein the spirits of the other world are supposed to visit the abode of the living in the winter.

(From the National Museum, the McGill University Museum and the Royal Ontario Museum.

Collected by G. M. Dawson, C. F. Newcombe, Marius Barbeau, H. I. Smith and others).

## No. 104

## HEADDRESSES

The headdresses and the rattles of the Tsimshyan—particularly the Niska—count among the finest carvings of the West Coast. The beautiful plaques on the headdresses were one and all from the hands of the best artists, whose services

were requisitioned by preference, and whose work was a labour of skill and love. Some of these plaques, which were encased in a crown and sat on the forehead, are adorned with diminutive figures, which are as a rule a delight to the eye. Most of these carvings were painted with native ochres crushed in salmon roe, saliva and other fixatives.

They were used by high chiefs, whose favourite emblem they reproduce, in the *halka-it* or chief's dance, during the festivals.

(The Royal Ontario Museum, the National Museum. From the early collectors, C. F. Newcombe and Marius Barbeau).

## No. 105 STATUETTES AND DETACHED FIGURES

The first pair show a Haida of Queen Charlotte Islands and his wife with a child in arms, as they looked in everyday life. These figures were not symbolic like most of the other West Coast carvings, but they are purely realistic. They are the work of a clever carver, who for a while yielded to his inborn impulse and humour, and worked for sheer pleasure.

(McGill University Museum. Dawson collection).

The two skeletal figures in the same room represent ghosts, with movable joints, whose limbs were propelled by strings, in the nocturnal ceremonies of the Kwakiutl. They were operated like marionettes. Their apparition conveyed fear and wonder.

(The Royal Ontario Museum).

The Grizzly-bear figure, boldly carved in conventional style, is a crest of some Haida families. It was part of a house decoration.

(National Museum. Early collection).

The small human figure on a pedestal was until recently part of one of the oldest totem poles of the Skeena. It is in the archaic style of the Tsimshyan, and is over seventy years old.

(Lent by Marius Barbeau).



**No. 106 CARVED BATONS**

The larger of the two beautifully carved batons is Haida, while the smaller is Niska (the northernmost of the three Tsimshyan nations). The connoisseur may discern in them the essential characteristics of Haida and Tsimshyan art at their best. The first is highly decorative, the style is mature and the lines perfectly smooth and firm; the figures are boldly treated—the beak of the Raven is curved down to fit the shape of the stick. The small Niska staff is nonetheless the better of the two, for its unique native beauty, the refinement and delicacy of its plastic forms and the finished blend of ancient style and inspired realism.

The Haida baton was a high chief's possession, fondly displayed in tribal ceremonies. The Niska cane was the secret charm of a medicine-man, the presumed reproduction of his magical dreams, wherein spirits appeared to him and enabled him to cure diseases. It was said to become alive during the shamanistic performances of the owner.

(National Museum. The first, from the early collections. The second, collected at Hazelton by Marius Barbeau).

**No. 107 PAINTED AND CARVED BOARDS**

The small boards carved in relief are the work of Haida artists. They represent the Grizzly-bear and the Raven, both the coat-of-arms of leading families on the Queen Charlotte Islands. The Raven with a fine decorative treatment is one of the finest carvings of the kind.

(National Museum. From the early collections).

The cedar board with a low-relief picture of the Finback whale split in halves, is part of a chief's ceremonial settee.

(National Museum. Early collections).

The mural painting with a long projecting beak is the largest now in existence and possibly the finest. It is from Gitwinkul, a Tsimshyan village. The Sengyak—Kingfisher—which it represents is a family crest. The board served as rear partition in a feast house; the precincts behind it contained the sacred possessions and the ritualistic mysteries of the owners.

(National Museum; collected by Marius Barbeau).

The large carving on the opposite wall represents the Sisiutl, a double-headed monster with fins, belonging to the supernatural world of the Kwakiutl and the Nootka. Its apparition from behind the curtain of mysteries in the feast house caused the ceremonial death of the guests, who were later brought back to life by the host.

(National Museum; from the early collections).

The painted carving over the decorated robe at the entrance also represents the Sisiutl, the double-headed monster. It comes from the Nootkas, of Western Vancouver Island. The grotesque style of the Nootkas, as here illustrated, is either a degenerate form of the northern art or, else, it represents an early stage, beyond which the southern West Coast tribes did not advance.

(National Museum. Collected by E. Sapir).

**No. 108 CARVED AND PAINTED CHESTS**

The three beautiful chests here exhibited count among the finest specimens of Niska (Tsimshyan) handicrafts. One of them, with splendid high relief carving, represents the Beaver, an emblem of the owner. The other, in the same room, represents the Grizzly-bear sitting up, also a family badge. The third, and largest, is decorated in flat conventional style, like most of the painted boxes.

These were used by a few high chiefs of the Tsimshyan. It was their exclusive privilege to sit and dance on these boxes in the winter festivals of their tribes.

(National Museum, Montreal Art Gallery. The Royal Ontario Museum. Collected by Marius Barbeau).

**No. 109 FOOD BOXES AND TRAYS**

The Haidas and the Bella Bellas made and traded with other tribes innumerable boxes and trays of this kind, which were used for storing or transporting food. Some of these articles are beautifully ornamented with painted figures and low relief carvings. The four sides of the boxes are from single cedar slabs, steamed and folded at the corners. As they were a trade article their designs are not coats-of-arms, but merely conventional figures, without ideographic significance.

Some of the smaller trays of wood, argilite or mountain sheep horn, exhibited in cases, are unsurpassed for sheer beauty and the fine adaptation of the Raven and Beaver and Eagle designs to the naturally exacting shapes of food dishes. These are from the hands of the very best Haida artists, and were presumably carved after 1850. Most of them form part of the G. M. Dawson collection of McGill University.

(National Museum, McGill University Museum, the Royal Ontario Museum).

#### No. 110 LADLES AND HORN SPOONS

Every chief owned sets of decorated ladles and spoons, which were meant for the use of distinguished guests in the winter festivals. The large ladles were filled with food or, in later days, liquor, and presented to high chiefs, who when called, had to stand while eating or drinking the contents on the spot, sometimes with the assistance of their leading nephews.

The two large ladles with a representation of the Raven's head on the handle are Haida, while the other beside them, with a human figure, is Tsimshian. The Tsimshian carving is superior to the others in quality.

The smaller black spoons in a case were elaborately carved from mountain-goat horn. The bowls of these at times were from mountain-sheep horn carved and steamed into shape.

These were the work of Haida and Tsimshian artisans. Their figures are more frequently mythological than emblematic.

(National Museum. Old Collections).

#### No. 111 CHARMS OR AMULETS

The small charms of ivory, antler or bone, sometimes adorned with fragments of abalone pearl from the sea, are delightfully carved or engraved. They are mostly Tsimshian and Haida, and show the native craftsmanship at its highest. The figures are both symbolical and mystic; they represent benevolent spirits—the Otter, the Salmon and other animals—seen in dreams by medicine-men; or again, they operate by

means of sympathetic magic. The double-headed snake charm was the most powerful and highly prized of them all, and it was from the first a favourite article for collectors and museums.

(The McGill University Museum and the National Museum. The Dawson and Newcombe collections).

#### No. 112 SLATE CARVINGS

Slate or black argilite as used in the carvings exhibited here was quarried only in the neighbourhood of Skidegate, a Haida village of the Queen Charlotte Islands. The carvers were mostly from Skidegate and Massett, two north-eastern villages of the islands. And it is probable that they resorted to this material only after 1850, when the white strangers showed their interest in native souvenirs. Some of these carvings are of unusual excellence, although the technique remains primarily one of wood carving rather than stone cutting. They represent heraldic figures, as in miniature totem poles, legendary characters and scenes of everyday life. Many of the best pieces of this kind are the work of the famous Haida chief, Edenshaw, and his faithful Tlingit slave. These two men spent much of their fruitful lives in a friendly rivalry, carving figures of all kinds, most of which now grace the public or private museum collections in Canada and abroad.

(McGill University Museum, The National Museum; from the Dawson and Newcombe collections).

#### No. 113 CHILKAT ROBES

The Chilkat robes were the work of Tlingit weavers of the village of Chilkat, on the Alaskan coast. They count among the most remarkable specimens of weaving in America, and are prized museum possessions. Their figures are mostly conventional in the usual West Coast style, although at times, the owners introduced their coat-of-arms instead. These blankets were bartered off to chiefs, from Chilkat southwards to Vancouver Island. Paul Kane's pictures of Indians of southern Vancouver Island, about 1850, show them with Chilkats as we know them at the present day. So that the fashion goes back at least a hundred years. The Niska (Tsimshian) claim that their women also knew how to make similar blankets in the old days. Indeed, the very

old Skateen blanket, exhibited in the southern room, and collected on the upper Nass, is said to be of Niska make. Unlike the two other real Chilkats, it does not consist of mountain-goat wool overlaying an inner core of cedar bark shreds, but it is all wool. For this reason it is of unique historical value.

(The Skateen blanket, from the Royal Ontario Museum, collected by Marius Barbeau. The Chilkats, one from the National Museum, the other lent by Marius Barbeau).

#### No. 114 DECORATED COSTUMES

The painted moose leather robe exhibited in the northern hall is one of the finest specimens of native design and painting in its own primitive medium. It represents the Flying-frog, a heraldic figure of Skateen, the Tsimshyan owner, an upper Nass river chief.

The other trade blanket robes with red flannel *appliqués* are also interesting and highly decorative. They represent native crests and designs transferred in the past century to a new medium. These robes were worn as part of a chief's regalia in festivals.

(The Royal Ontario Museum, and the National Museum. Collected by Marius Barbeau.)

#### No. 115 DRUMS AND RATTLES

These beautiful rattles are of Tsimshyan and Haida craftsmanship. The Niska were specialists in bird-like rattles, at least fifteen of their carvers of the past generation spending much of their time making rattles and headdresses for foreign exportation. These rattles were meant to accompany the songs of the high chiefs, who held them in their hands and shook them (they are hollow, with shot inside) to the rhythm of their dance steps.

The round wooden rattles were used for mystic purposes, by medicine-men, in their performances over their patients.

The skin drums, often painted, belonged to medicine-men of the Plateau tribes, in the interior of British Columbia. The coast tribes adopted them only in recent years.

(Lent by the National Museum and by Marius Barbeau).

#### No. 116 PAINTED ROOT HATS

These Asiatic-like hats were worn by native fishermen in the early days. They later became, when painted and adorned, part of a chief's regalia in festivals. They are woven from split spruce roots, and represent here the interesting West Coast craft of basket-making.

(National Museum).

#### No. 117 BRACELETS

Metals—with the possible exception of native copper—were not known to the prehistoric West Coast tribes. But as soon as they became available, after the discovery, many of their craftsmen, began to polish and engrave copper, iron and silver. The work of some of them, in the nineteenth century, commands our admiration. The old copper bracelet with insets of abalone shell, exhibited in a case, and the wide silver bracelets made of Mexican dollar coins, are worth close inspection. They possess all the qualities of native art in other media.

(National Museum, The Royal Ontario Museum).

#### No. 118 THE ALEXEE PAINTINGS

The two paintings by Fred Alexee in one of the smaller rooms might be placed among the primitives of Canadian art here exhibited. They are worth special notice. In European countries primitive paintings have been prized for their naïveté, their charm, and the historical perspective which they confer upon the development of art. In Canada this category has so far eluded search, if we except Indian art pure and simple. Alexee's work possesses something of the quality which we should expect from such primitive painting, and he himself is an old Tsimshyan half-breed of Port Simpson, B.C. What he depicts in his many pictures is Port Simpson, his tribesmen, their legends and their former battles. His sense of colour is limited; his composition is as a rule excellent; and the movement is spontaneous and spirited. Artists have already expressed their admiration for his efforts, which are carried out both in oil and water colour. One of the two pictures here exhibited represents a battle between the Haidas and Tsimshyan at Port Simpson, about 1840; and the other, native houses and totem poles of Port Simpson.

(Lent by John Flewin and A. V. Jackson.)

# WORKS OF CANADIAN ARTISTS

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## M. EMILY CARR, Victoria, B.C.

1. GUYASDOMS, WEST COAST, B.C.
2. TANU, QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS
3. ALERT BAY, WEST COAST
4. KISPAYAKS VILLAGE, UPPER SKEENA
5. GUYASDOMS
6. CAPE MUDGE, WEST COAST
7. GITSEGYULA VILLAGE, SKEENA
8. GITWANGA, SKEENA
9. CAPE MUDGE
10. GRAVE-YARD ENTRANCE, CAMPBELL RIVER
11. ALERT BAY
12. SKEDANS, QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS
13. KISPAYAKS TOTEM POLES
14. YAN, QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS
15. SKEDANS, QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS
16. SITKA TOTEM POLE, ALASKA
17. } TOTEM POLES, SKIDEGATE, QUEEN CHARLOTTE
18. } ISLANDS
19. YAN TOTEM POLE
20. TOTEM POLE, HAZELTON, SKEENA RIVER
21. TOTEM POLE, GITWANGA
22. ALERT BAY
23. ALERT BAY
24. HAZELTON POLE AND ROCHER DÉBOULÉ
25. SKIDEGATE POLE
26. MAMALIGDOLA, WEST COAST

## LAWREN HARRIS, Toronto, Ont.

27. GROUP OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKETCHES

# ADDENDA

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## M. EMILY CARR, Victoria, B.C.

121. HOOKED RUGS (From Indian Designs)
122. COLLECTION OF POTTERY (From Indian Designs)

## W. LANGDON KHIN

41. WILLIAM ALLUS
54. HAIIDZEMERHS
57. TOTEM POLES, GITWINLEUL
62. ALIMLAHAE
63. HANAMUH
64. GITKSAN FEAST
69. TOTEM POLES AT KISPAYAKS
70. CHIEF EARTHQUAKE
71. GITGIGANEE
72. GITKSAN FEAST
73. GWINNU
74. TOTEM POLES AT KISPAYAKS

EXHIBITION OF CANADIAN WEST COAST ART

27. GROUP OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKETCHES

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EXHIBITION OF CANADIAN WEST COAST ART

EDWIN H. HOLGATE, Montreal, Que.

- 28. GITSEGYUKLA
- 29. INDIAN GRAVEYARD, ROCHER DÉBOULÉ
- 30. CHIEF GAUM, TSIMSVAN
- 31. CHIEF GITHAWN, SALMON-PERSON
- 32. JIM ROBINSON (Half Breed), GITKSAN
- 33. MRS. WILLIAM NASS
- 34. CHIEF EARTHQUAKE, GITWANGA
- 35. LIZZIE GITSALAS
- 36. HALF BREED GIRL
- 37. TOTEM POLES, GITSEGYUKLA
- 38. TOTEM POLES OF GITSALAS CANYON
- 39. PORT ESSINGTON
- 40. KISPAYAKS MOUNTAIN

A. Y. JACKSON, R.C.A., Montreal, Que.

- 42. GITSEGYUKLA VILLAGE
- 43. TOTEM POLES, HAZELTON
- 44. KISPAYAKS VILLAGE
- 45. GROUP OF SKETCHES OF INDIAN VILLAGES ON THE SKEENA RIVER.

PAUL KANE (1810-1883).

- 46. CAW-WACHAM
- 47. FALS OF COLVILLE
- 48. BABINE CHIEF
- 49. CLAL-LUM WOMEN WEAVING
- 50. A FLAT-HEAD WOMAN
- 51. MEDICINE MASK DANCE
- 52. SCENE NEAR WALA-WALLA
- 53. A BATTLE

(From the Osler collection. Lent by the Royal Ontario Museum).

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EXHIBITION OF CANADIAN WEST COAST ART

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**J. E. H. MacDONALD, A.R.C.A., Toronto, Ont.**

- 55. EARLY MORNING, ROCKY MOUNTAINS
- 56. GROUP OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKETCHES

**PEGGY NICHOL, Ottawa, Ont.**

- 58. SMENA-TWO-YOUNG-MEN
- 59. MRS. HECTOR CRAWLER
- 60. WIDOW JOHN POUCELT
- 61. CHARLEY DAVIS

**WALTER J. PHILLIPS, A.R.C.A., Winnipeg, Man.**

- 65. COMMUNITY HOUSES, MAMALILICoola
- 66. MAMALILICoola
- 67. FLOATING DOCK MAMALILICoola
- 68. JIM KING'S WHARF, ALERT BAY, B.C.

**ANNIE D. SAVAGE, Montreal, Que.**

- 75. TEMLAHAM, UPPER SKEENA RIVER
- 76. GROUP OF SKETCHES, UPPER SKEENA RIVER

**CHARLES H. SCOTT, Vancouver, B.C.**

- 80. GROUP OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKETCHES

**FREDERICK M. BELL SMITH, R.C.A. (1846-1923)**

- 82. MISTS AND GLACIERS OF THE SELKIRKS

**F. H. VARLEY, A.R.C.A., Vancouver, B.C.**

- 84. GROUP OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKETCHES

**FLORENCE WYLE, A.R.C.A., Toronto, Ont.**

- 88. GROUP OF TOTEM POLES, UPPER SKEENA RIVER  
(Plaster Models)

- 89. RELIEF HEAD (Plaster)
- 90. RELIEF HEAD (Plaster)

## FIGURES

(Note about the titles: the first is the title in the 1927 catalogue for Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern; the second is the title that is presently in use.)

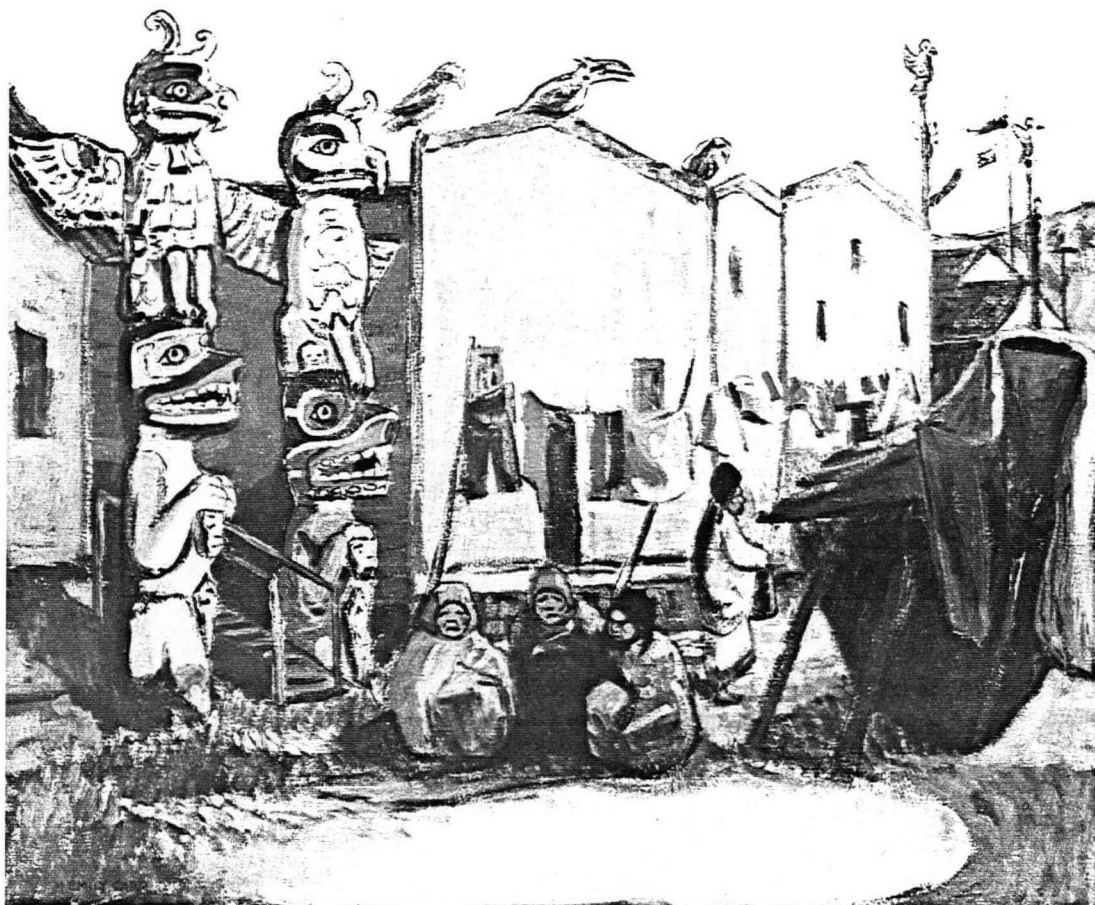


Fig. 1 Emily Carr Alert Bay (1912)  
oil on canvas  
65.9 x 81.3 cm.  
Beaverbrook Art Gallery  
(Indian Village, Alert Bay)



Fig. 2 Emily Carr Alert Bay (1912)  
oil on canvas  
87.3 x 36.5 cm.  
Private collection  
(Alert Bay--Indian in yellow blanket)



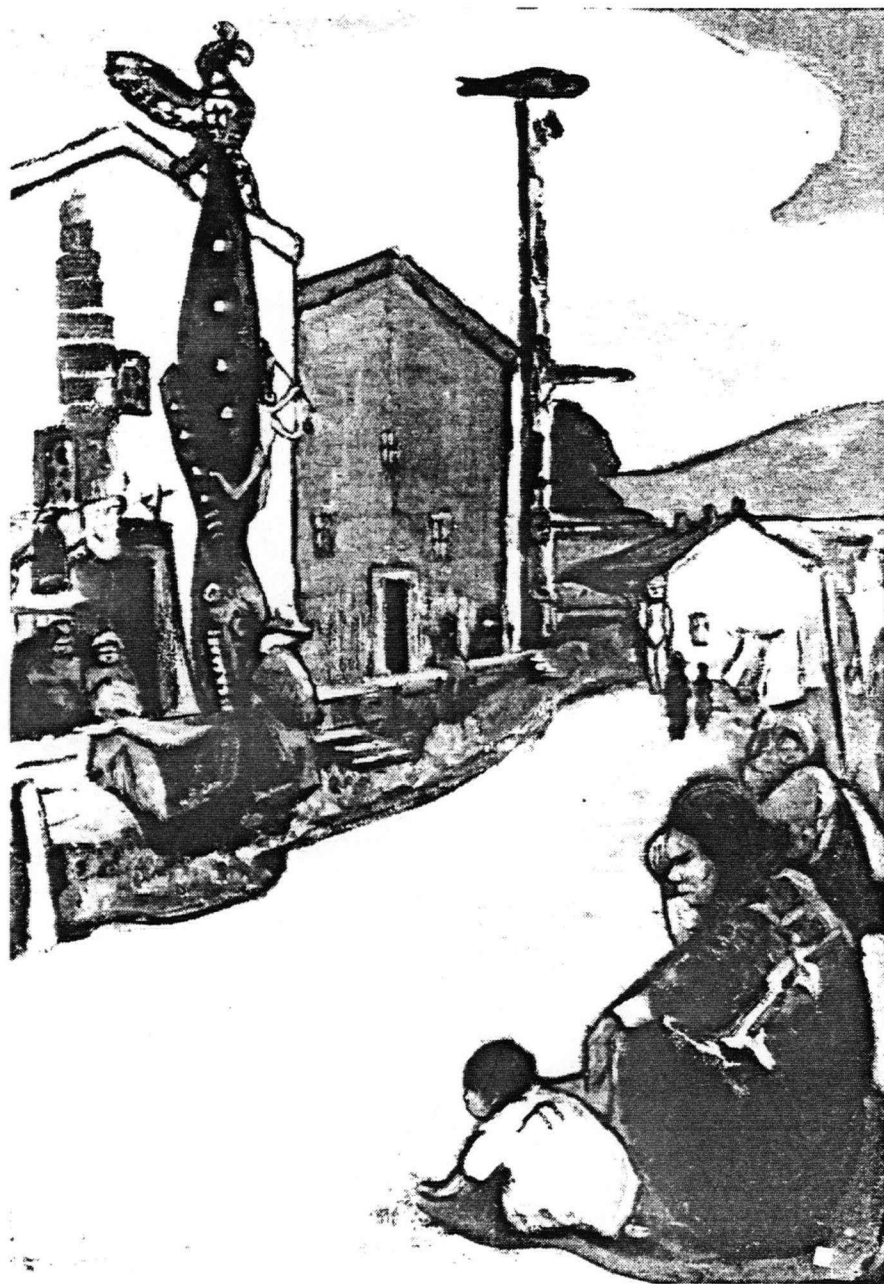


Fig. 3 Emily Carr Alert Bay, West Coast (1912)  
oil on canvas  
81.8 x 60 cm.  
Private collection  
(Street, Alert Bay)

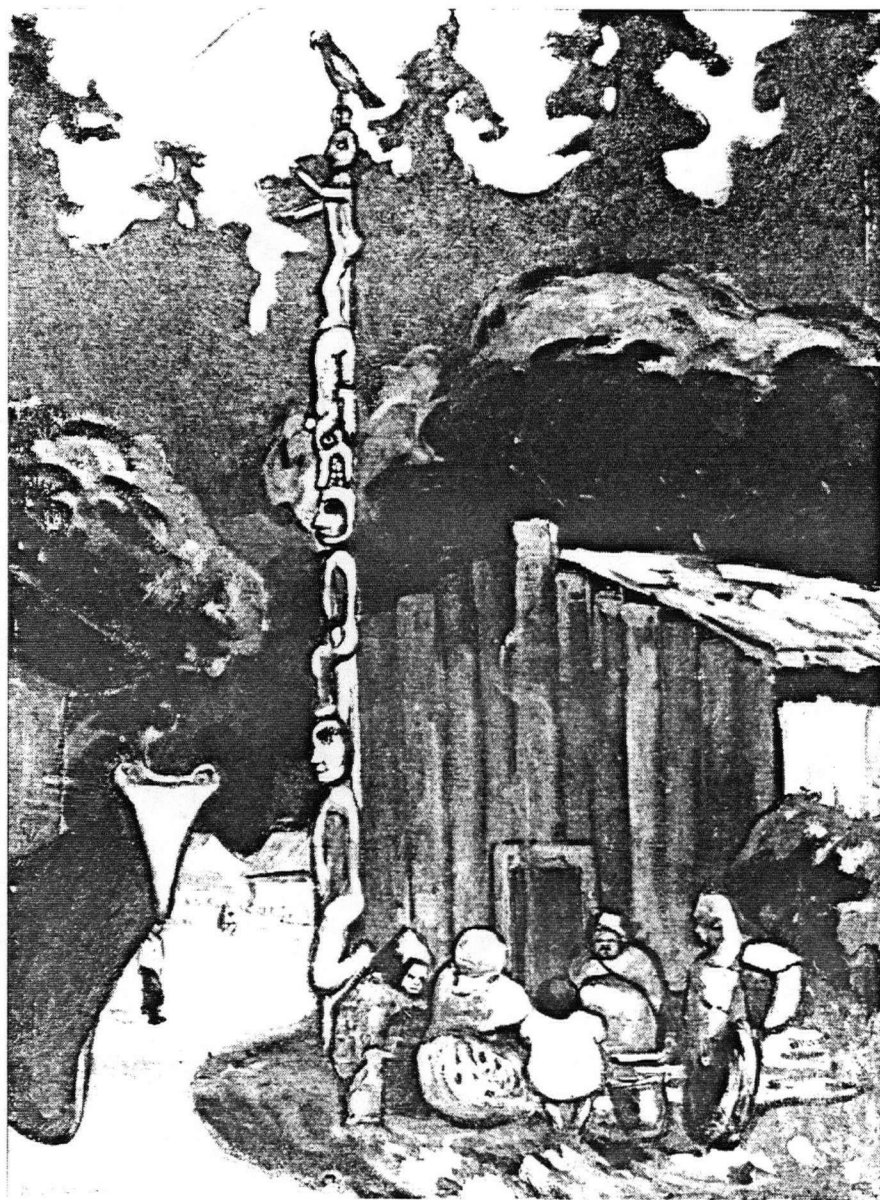


Fig. 4 Emily Carr Cape Mudge, West Coast (1912)  
oil on canvas  
71.8 x 58.7 cm.  
Private collection  
(Indians with Totems--Cape Mudge)

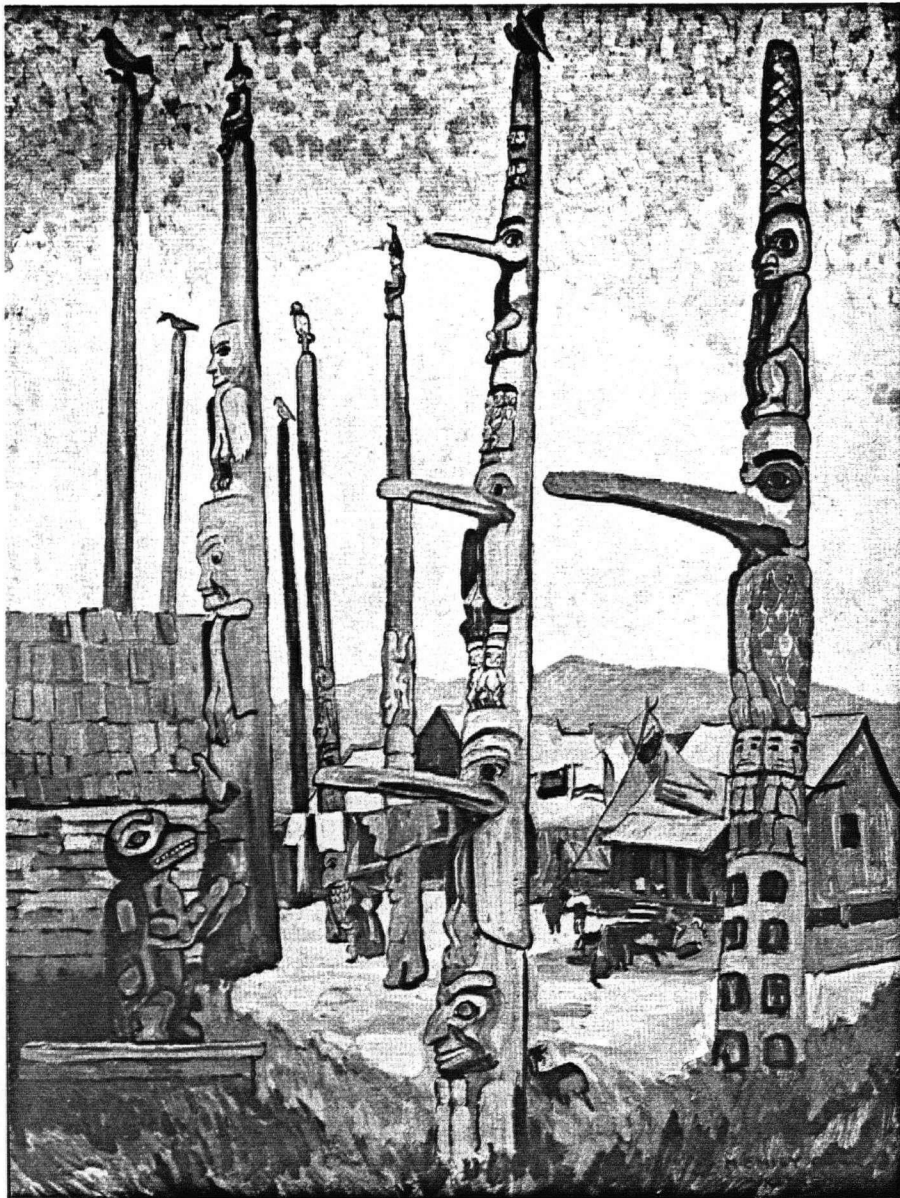


Fig. 5 Emily Carr Gitsegula Village, Skeena (1912)  
 oil on canvas  
 127 x 98.8 cm  
 Vancouver Art Gallery  
 (Totem Poles, Kitsegukla)



Fig. 6 Emily Carr Graveyard Entrance, Campbell River (1912)  
oil on canvas  
72.5 x 52.7 cm.  
Private collection  
(Campbell River, B.C.)

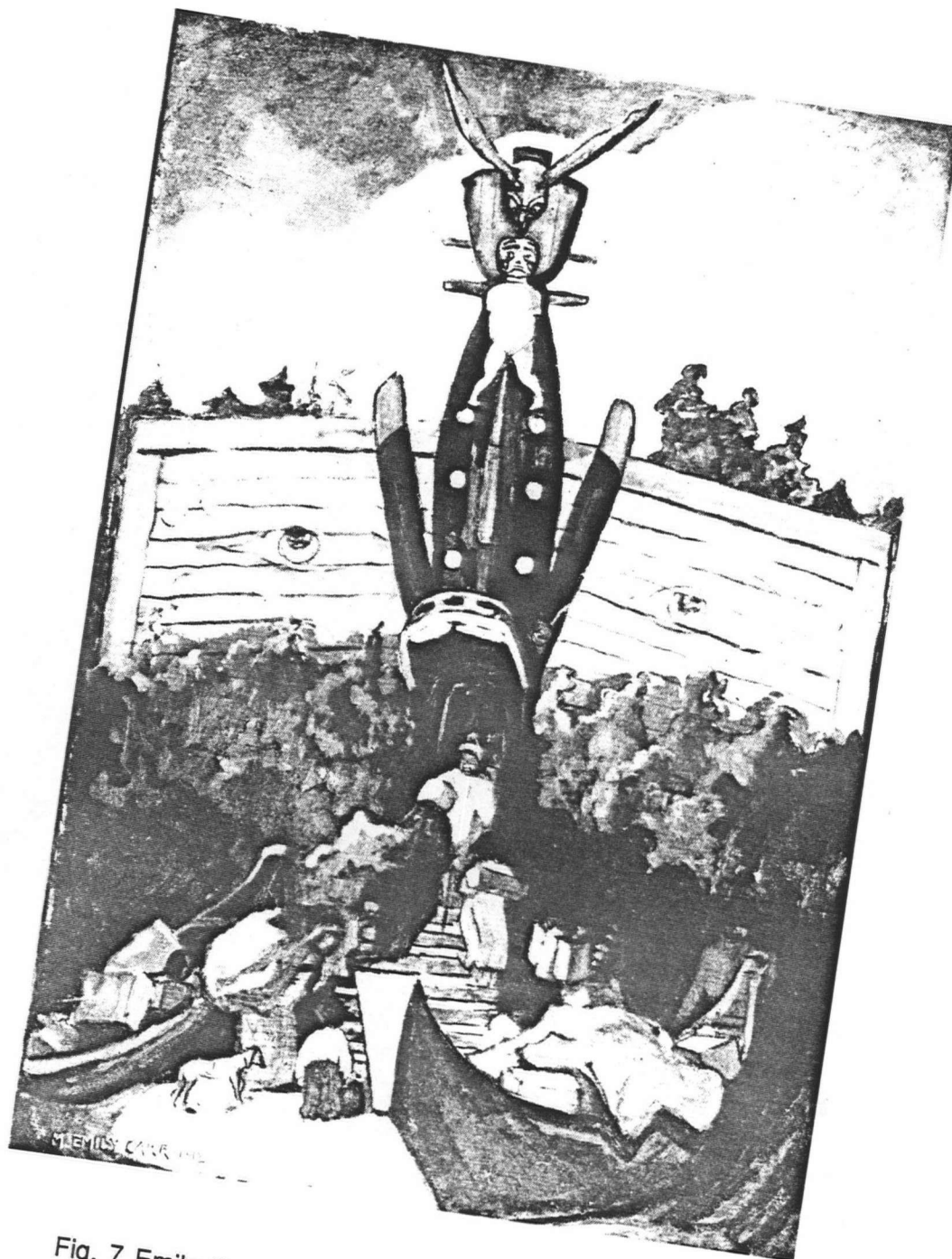


Fig. 7 Emily Carr Guyasdoms, West Coast, B.C. (1912)  
 oil on card  
 65.8 x 96.4 cm.  
 Vancouver Art Gallery  
 (Old Indian House, Northern British Columbia)

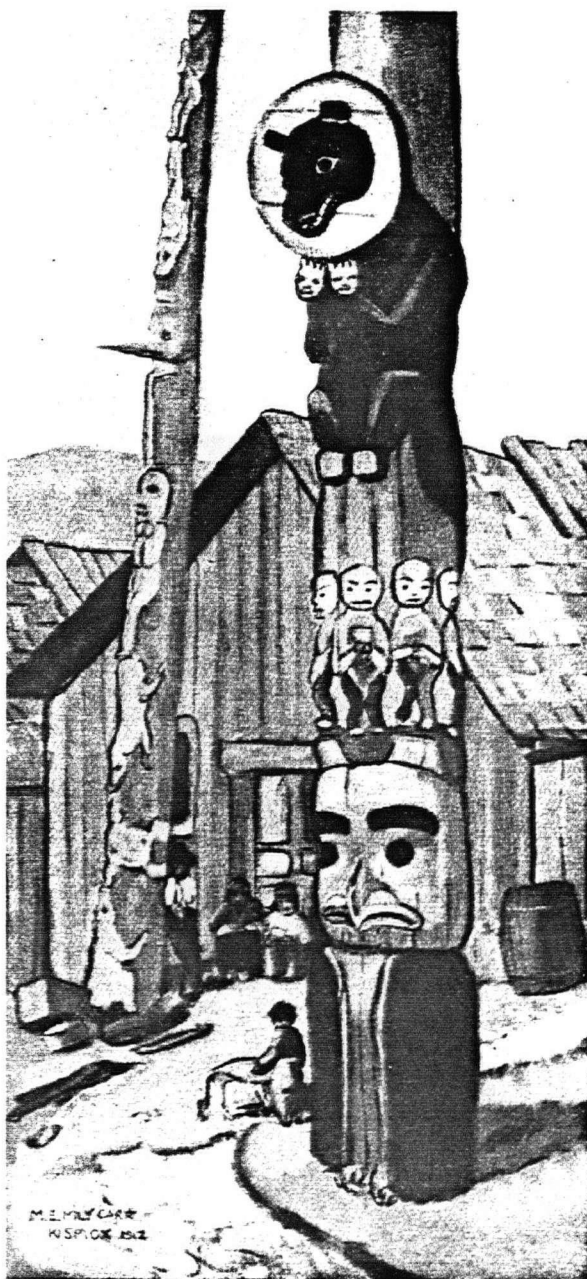


Fig. 8 Emily Carr Kispayaks Totem Poles (1912)  
oil on canvas  
93.6 x 45.0 cm.  
Private collection  
(The Totem of the Bear and the Moon)





Fig. 9 Emily Carr Mamallicoola, West Coast (1912)

oil on canvas  
130 x 89.5 cm.

National Gallery of Canada  
(Memalilaqua, Knight Inlet - Mimquimlees)

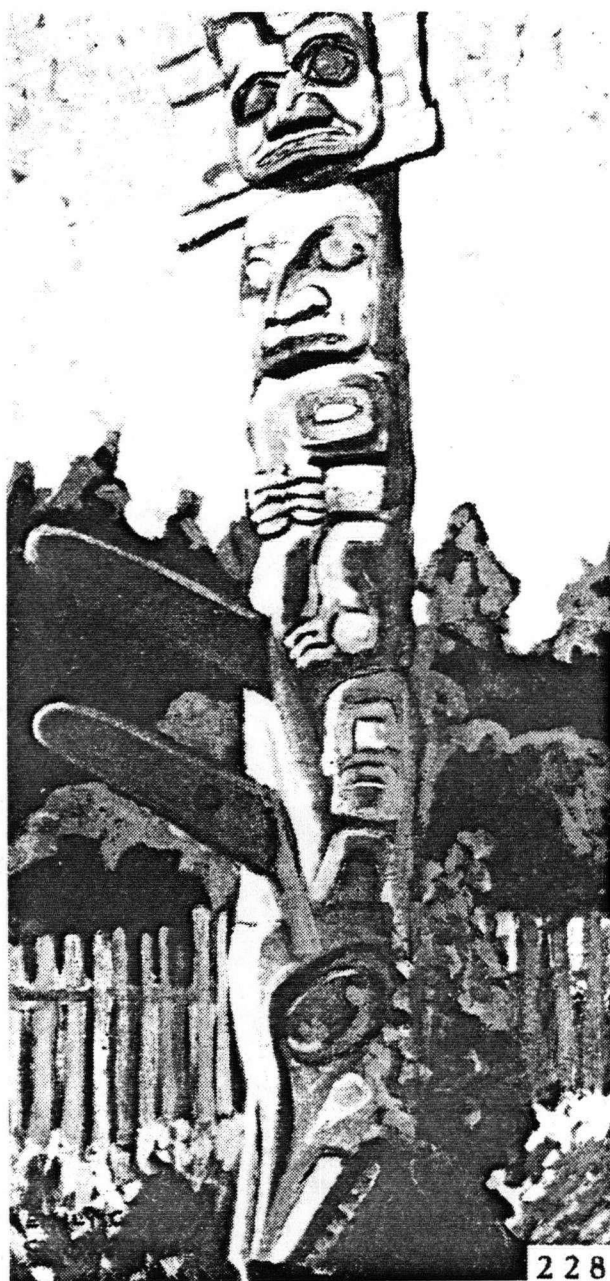


Fig. 10 Emily Carr Skidegate Pole (1912)  
oil on card  
65.4 x 32.5 cm.  
Vancouver Art Gallery  
(Skidegate)





Fig. 11 Emily Carr Totem Pole, Skidegate,  
Queen Charlotte Islands (1912)  
oil on card  
64.5 x 32.5 cm.  
Vancouver Art Gallery  
(Skidegate - Beaver Pole)



Fig. 12 Edwin Holgate Chief Gaum, Tsimshian (1926)

red and black chalk on paper  
57.8 x 45.7 cm.  
National Gallery of Canada  
(Tsimshian Chief - Gaum)

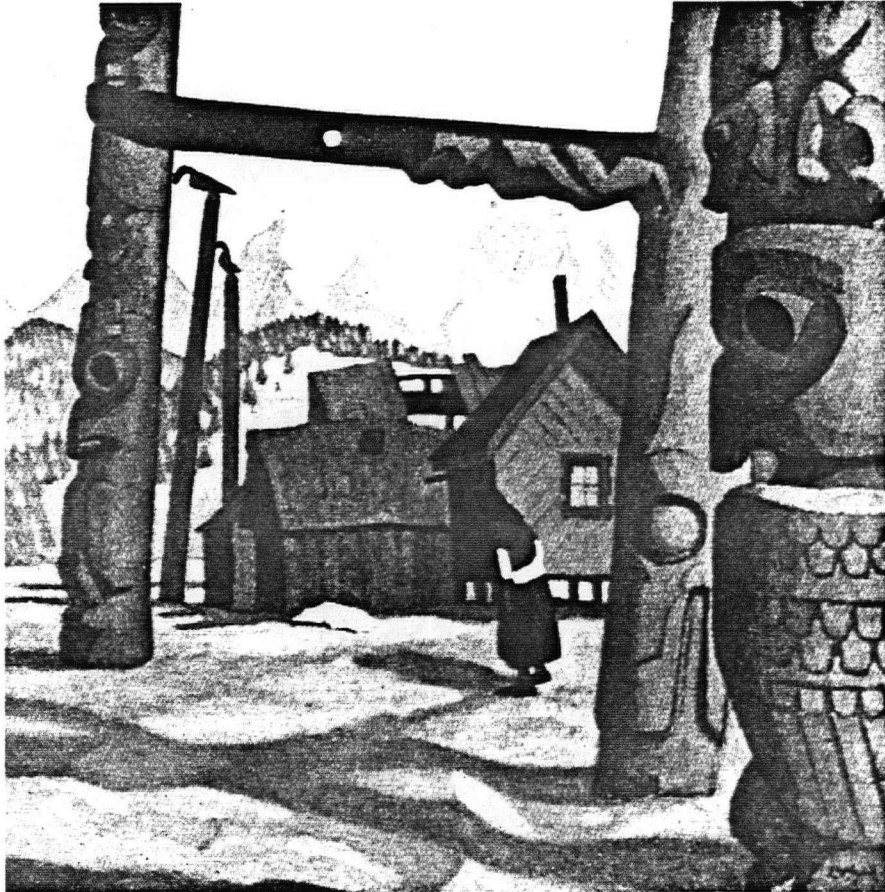


Fig. 13 Edwin Holgate Totem Poles, Gitsegiuklas (1927)  
oil on canvas  
81.3 x 81.3 cm.  
National Gallery of Canada  
(Totem Poles, Gitsegiuklas)



Fig. 14 Alexander Y. Jackson Kispayaks Village (1926)  
oil on canvas  
54.0 x 66.8 cm.  
McMichael Canadian Collection  
(Skeena Crossing)



Fig. 15 W. Langdon Kihn Laelt (1924)  
gouache and conté  
75.9 x 50.8  
Vancouver Art Gallery  
(Solomon Harris)



Fig. 16 W. Langdon Kihn Totem Poles, Gitwinkul (1924)  
oil on canvas  
124.8 x 93.6 cm.  
National Gallery of Canada  
(Gitwinkool Totem Poles)





Fig. 17 W.J. Phillips Mamalicoola (1927)  
colour wood-cut  
30.5 x 35.3 cm.  
National Gallery of Canada  
(Mamalicoola, B.C.)

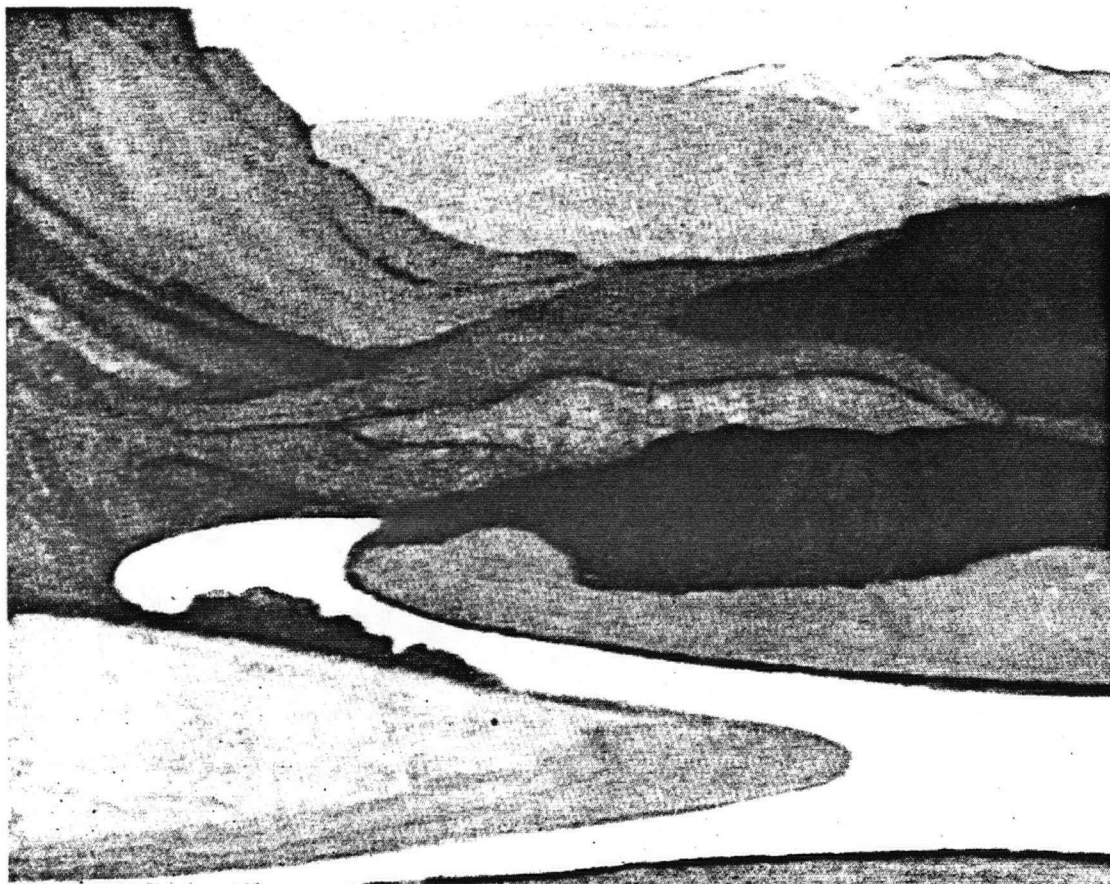


Fig. 18 Anne Savage Temlaham, Upper Skeena River (1926)  
oil on canvas  
50.1 x 62.4 cm.  
Private collection  
(Hills on the Skeena)





Fig. 19 - Installation

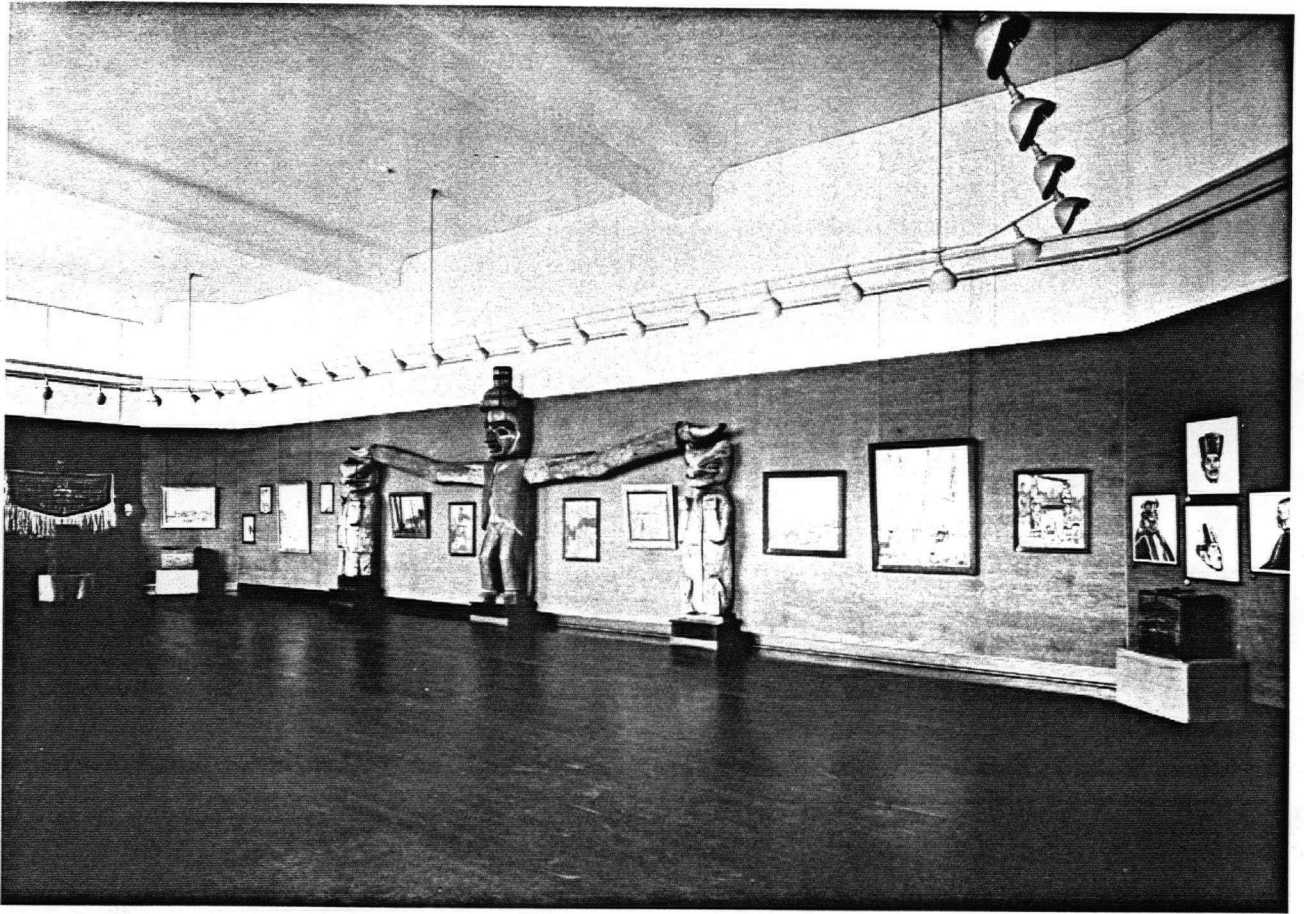


Fig. 20 - Installation

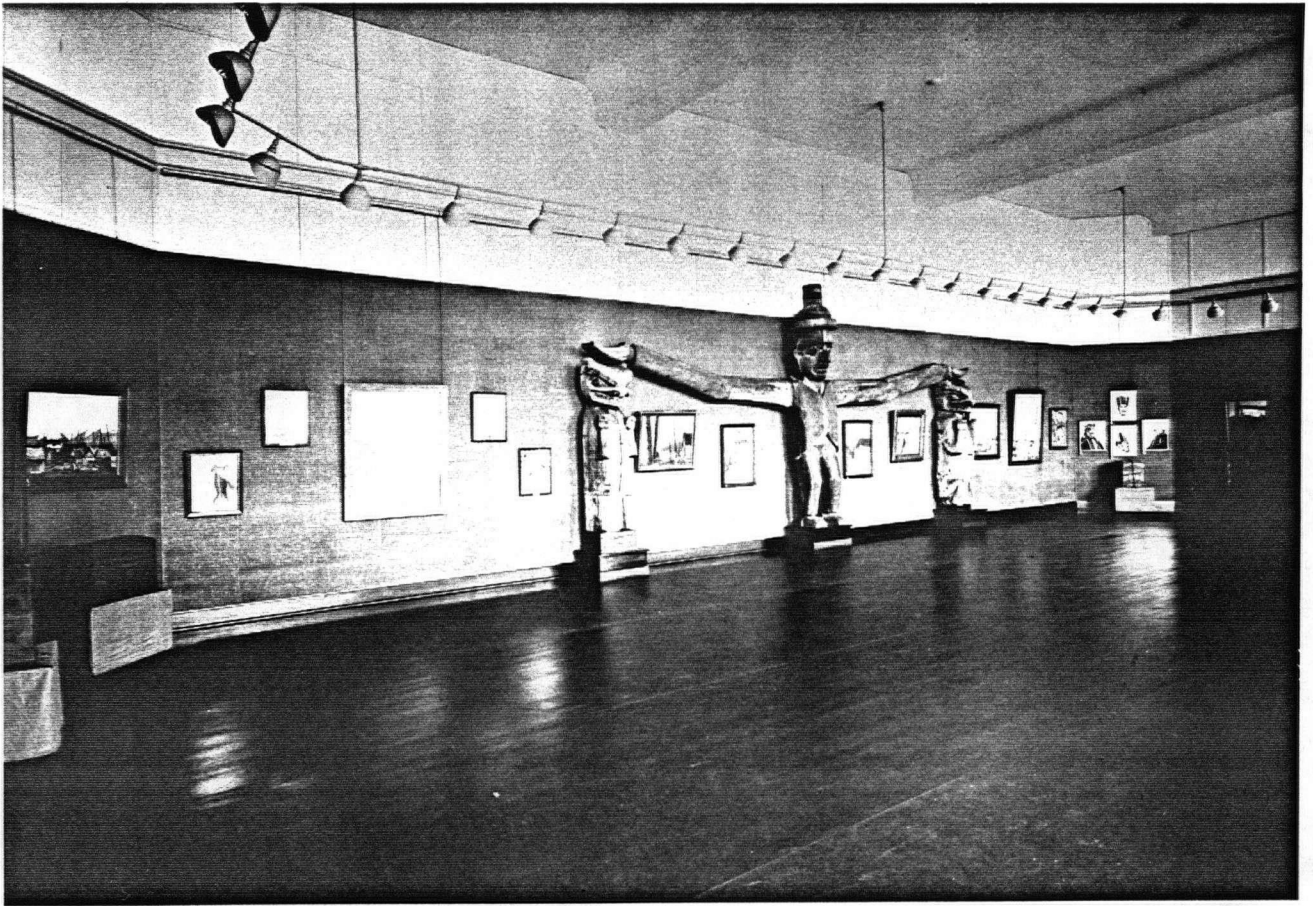


Fig. 21 - Installation

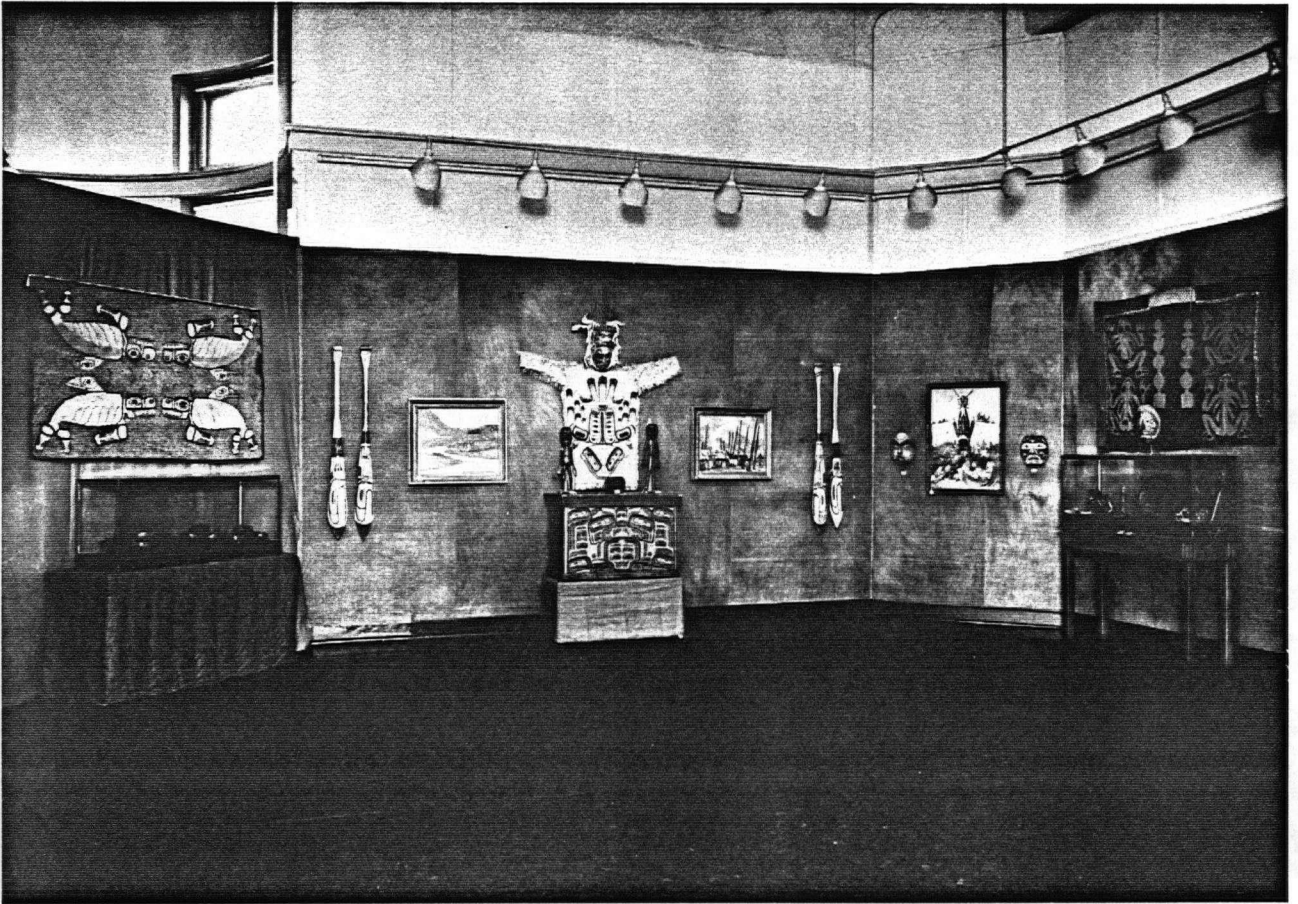


Fig. 22 - Installation



Fig. 23 - Installation



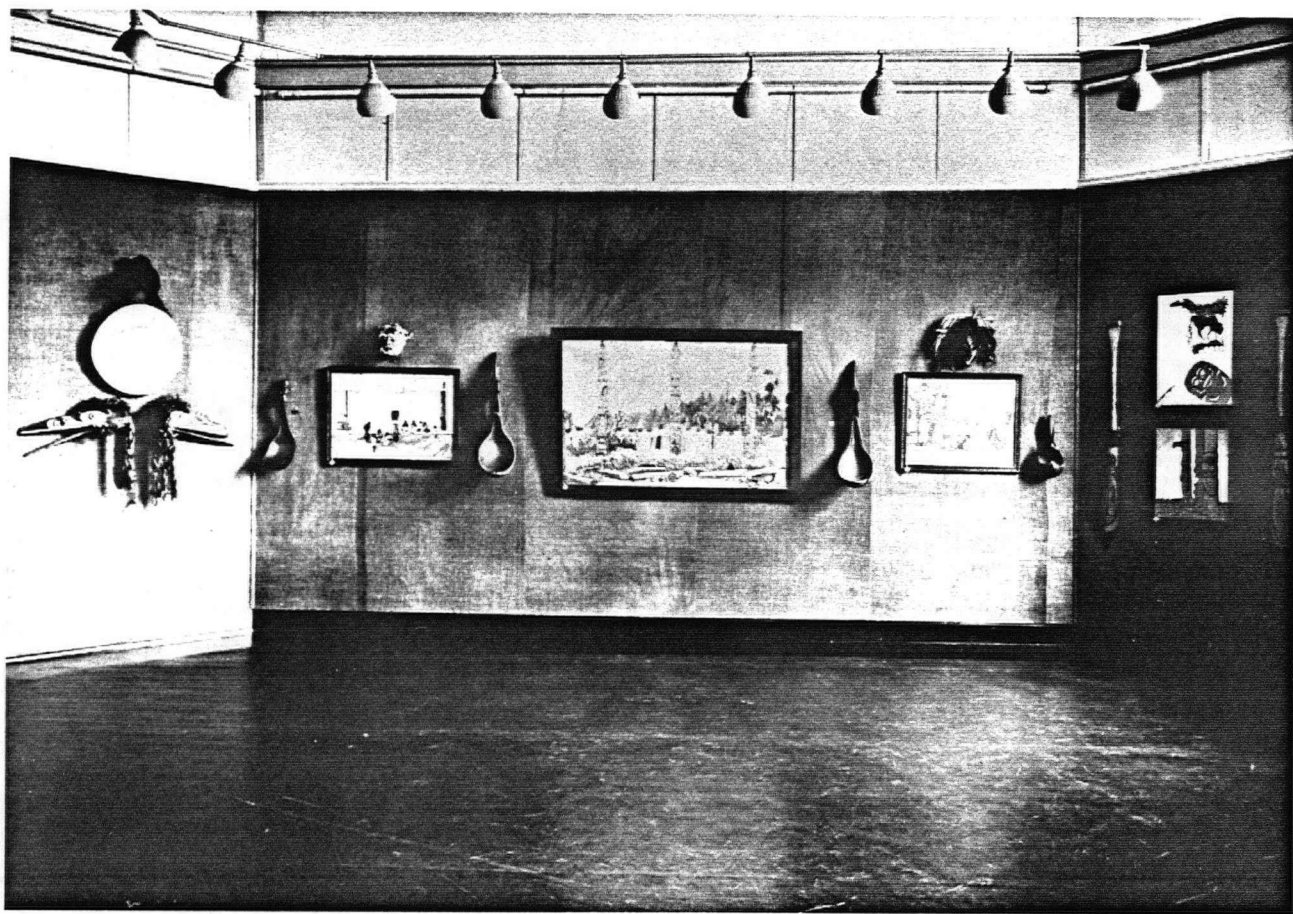


Fig. 24 - Installation

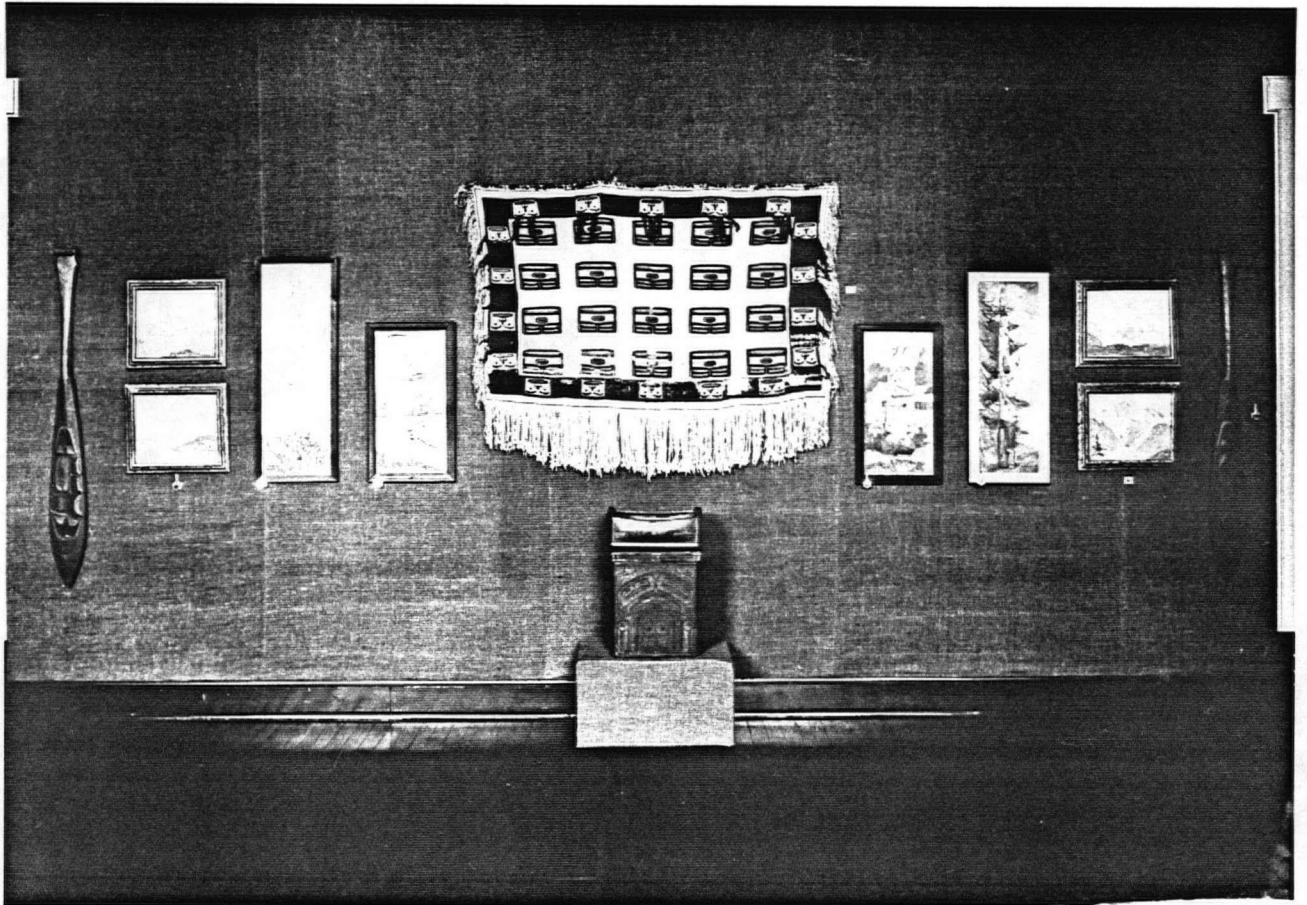


Fig. 25 - Installation



Fig. 26 - Installation