

A Regional Agency:
Maritime Art Association Programming from 1935 to 1945

Katharine Brayley

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ABSTRACT

A Regional Agency: Maritime Art Association Programming from 1935 to 1945

Katharine Brayley

In the history of Canadian visual culture, art societies, associations and organizations have played a significant role. At various points throughout Canada's art history, these organizations have responded to the needs of a specific artistic community. Founded in 1935 the Maritime Art Association was the country's first regional artists association, responding to the need for an active regional infrastructure in the arts; representing groups from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The MAA's cultural and educational programming had a significant affect on the development of a united regional community in the arts. This thesis provides an analysis of Maritime Art Association programming from 1935 to 1945. Through their program of traveling exhibitions, lecture series, radio broadcasts on the arts, and various other activities, the MAA positioned the arts to become an arena for regional discussion, appreciation and solidarity. Throughout this investigation, the MAA is positioned as an active agent in the fostering of a critical arts community adept at aesthetic appreciation in the Maritime Provinces.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis traces the development of the Maritime Art Association's cultural programming from 1935 to 1945. As the first regional art association in the country, the Maritime Art Association (MAA) became the mouth piece for city and province wide art clubs and societies, public schools, colleges, universities, and civic groups from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. With no regional infrastructure in the arts prior to its founding, its purpose was clear: "To promote a knowledge and appreciation of Art"¹ in the Maritime Provinces. By the end of the Association's first year, it represented seventeen member-groups in thirteen different locations. The MAA acted as a stimulus for the growth and development of a thriving united arts community, fostering art activities, as well as cultural and educational programming. As a result, MAA programming indicates the influence and agency of this Association at a particular moment in the history of the Maritime Provinces.

The most prominent components of MAA cultural programming were a lecture series and circulating exhibitions borrowed from the National Gallery of Canada (NGC). Originally conceived as an inter-provincial exhibition circuit, the NGC exhibitions greatly increased the number and variety of national and international artists and art works shown in the region. The MAA executives also made their own significant contributions to the program of traveling exhibitions. In their desire to foster a regional art, the MAA organized a series of solo and group exhibitions that focused on works by Maritime artists. The most significant was *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*,

¹ Maritime Art Association Constitution and By-Laws, 1935. Acadia University Archives and Special Collections (AUASC), 1900:028, Walter Abell Fonds, Maritime Art Association founding.

the Association's annual members exhibition. This show provided the first comprehensive view of art produced in the Maritime region. The actions of the MAA provided a greater platform for Maritime art and artists and positioned the Maritime arts community as an arena for regional discussion, appreciation and solidarity.

In Chapter One of this thesis, I will contextualize the Maritime Art Association within the history of the Maritime region, outline the events that led to its formation and locate it within the broader Canadian context. Through this history, I address the influence of the Carnegie Corporation of New York City, as well as the significant impact of the MAA's first president Walter Abell's aesthetic and educational philosophies on the actions of the Association. In order to appreciate the unique characteristics of the MAA, it is imperative to consider other Canadian art groups at this time. This broader lens provides a framework through which to view the MAA within a Canadian art historical context.

Chapter Two provides an in-depth analysis of the Maritime Art Association's first ten years of cultural and educational programming. This discussion highlights the role of the MAA in the formation of a united regional arts community. The chapter begins with an analysis of the Association's lecture series and then addresses lecturers from within the region, who were generally members of the MAA executive. I also discuss lecturers sent to the region under the aegis of the NGC, which included members of the national and international art communities. This leads to a discussion of the main component of MAA programming – the circulation of traveling exhibitions borrowed from the NGC. One of the most significant aspects of the exhibitions' circulated by the MAA, were the

published commentaries written largely by members of the Association. In my analysis of these commentaries, I illustrate the educational aspect of MAA programming, as its authors wrote for a public with limited aesthetic awareness and familiarity with the arts. Finally, the role of the traveling exhibition at this time, in both Canada and the United States, is explored in relation to those shows produced by the MAA or borrowed from the NGC.

In Chapter Three, my focus is on the Association's annual members exhibition, *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*. Adjudicated by authorities from outside of the region, this exhibition was intended to stimulate creative effort among members of the Maritime art community and present the work of as many as 44 Maritime artists at a time. An analysis of the jury reports and critical reviews in the press illustrates the reception of these works within the Canadian arts community. This discussion of the MAA's Annual exhibition suggests the dominant trends in art production in the Maritime region in the first half of the 20th century as they were manifested in the cultural programming of the MAA.

The archival material used for this thesis originated in the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives; the Carnegie Corporation of New York Records, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries; the Acadia University Archives; Dalhousie University Archives; the Mount Allison University Archives; the Public Archives of Nova Scotia; the New Brunswick Provincial Archives and the Public Archives of Prince Edward Island.² These archives include documents such as:

² Copies of archival documents from these institutions were compiled by Professor Sandra Paikowsky (Concordia University) and are now located in the Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art, Concordia University, Montreal (Institute, Concordia U). Copies of all archival

Association circulars, president's reports and minutes from the annual meetings, MAA members' personal and Association correspondence, as well as correspondence between the NGC and various other Canadian art groups.

Printed primary sources include articles produced during the span of the MAA's existence and are published in *Maritime Art Magazine*, *Canadian Art* and various other periodicals contemporary to the Association. Walter Abell, with contributions from other active members of the MAA, is the primary author of these texts, which are an invaluable indicator of the aesthetic and philosophical ideals of the Association. Local newspaper reviews of lectures and exhibitions also provide valuable information. While they are not considered critical art reviews, these local perspectives allowed me to understand how different artistic approaches were received within the Maritime community. The most significant secondary sources for this thesis are Sandra Paikowsky's article "'From Away' The Carnegie Corporation, Walter Abell and American Strategies for Art in the Maritimes from the 1920s to the 1940s," (2006) and Kirk Niergarth's doctoral dissertation "Art and Democracy: New Brunswick Artists and Canadian Culture between the Great Depression and the Cold War,"(2007).

Due to a lack of visual documentation and the propensity to change the titles of art works over time, especially in relation to those of lesser-known Maritime artists, I have been unable to identify the majority of works exhibited in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*. While this does not preclude their eventual discovery, their documentation and present location are unknown. Therefore, I have provided a small sampling of works included in the 1935 to 1945 MAA Annuals. These works currently

material used for this thesis were viewed at the Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute. The information in these documents is accessible through the Maritime Art Association website: <http://maa.concordia.ca/>

belong to various collections throughout the Maritime region and central Canada, such as the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the New Brunswick Museum, among others. I have also included the images reproduced by the MAA in exhibition commentaries and *Maritime Art Magazine*.

As the first regional art association in Canada, this thesis aims to highlight the significant role the Maritime Art Association played in the development of a united regional art community. By highlighting its cultural and educational programming, I intend to address the significant role it played in furthering the arts in the Maritime Provinces. Preeminent among art associations in Canada's art history, this analysis of Maritime Art Association programming from 1935 to 1945, aims to highlight its progressive nature. It is my hope that this reading will contribute to recent scholarship on the history of the arts in the Maritime Provinces in the 20th century.

CHAPTER ONE

The Founding of the Maritime Art Association

The history of the Maritime art community is unique in Canada's art history as it was home to Canada's first regional art association. In this chapter, I contextualize the Maritime Art Association within the history of the Maritime region. Following this, I explore the events that led to the formation of the MAA in 1935, through the joint effort of Walter Abell, Acadia University, and Elizabeth McLeod, Mount Allison University. Assisted by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Corporation's role in the development of the MAA are important to my discussion; as are founding president Walter Abell's aesthetic and educational philosophies. Finally, I position the MAA within the broader Canadian context by examining other art associations at this time and suggest the MAA was a leader among regional organizations promoting the arts.

1.1. A Brief History of the Arts in the Maritime Provinces

The history of art in the Maritime region during the late 19th and early 20th centuries is intimately related to the histories of the two main educational institutions in the region: the Victoria School of Art and Design in Halifax (founded in 1887), renamed the Nova Scotia College of Art in 1925, and the Owens Museum of Fine Art at Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB (founded in 1895). The educational philosophies of these institutions were influenced by the history of the Maritime region with its ties to the British Empire. As a result, the dominant aesthetic in art production was a version of the English academic approach popular at this time; characterized by an affinity for romantic

naturalism and what can be termed the “polite arts,” such as watercolour sketches of the landscape and architectural subjects.³

The goals of the Victoria School of Art and Design (VSAD), described in its mandate, were: “to provide technical instruction and art culture [and] to educate public taste by establishing exhibitions and classes in the fine arts.”⁴ With principal concerns being aesthetic, cultural and vocational training, the mandate of the VSAD is not unusual in the context of international art pedagogy in the late nineteenth century. In fact, the method of education at the VSAD closely mirrors that of the National Art Training School and Museum at South Kensington (London, England); whose program was centered on industrial drawing and design, as a means to better serve the nation’s economic needs.⁵

In the early years of the 20th century the focus of the VSAD shifted closer to the fine arts and away from architectural and industrial draftsmanship, in part due to the founding of the Nova Scotia Technical College in 1907. At this point students were under the tutelage of the “grand old man of Nova Scotian art,”⁶ Henry Rosenberg, who taught at

³ Robert Stacey and Liz Wylie, *Eighty/Twenty: 100 Years of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design* (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1988), 30.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

Documents relating to the Victoria College of Art and Design, including its mandate, are located in: Nova Scotia College of Art Collection, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax. This includes Victoria School of Art and Design and Nova Scotia College of Art records.

⁵ Donald Soucy and Harold Pearse, *The First Hundred Years: A History of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design* (Fredericton: University of New Brunswick Faculty of Education; Halifax: The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1993), 12.

For a detailed account of the history and development of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design see: Donald Soucy and Harold Pearse, *The First Hundred Years: A History of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design* (Fredericton: University of New Brunswick Faculty of Education; Halifax: The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1993).

⁶ Leroy Zwicker, “Art in Nova Scotia,” *Canadian Art* 3.1 (October-November 1945): 15.

the VSAD from 1898 to 1910. However, the training remained traditional in nature as students worked from still life arrangements and life studies with costumed models, in charcoal, pen and ink, watercolour and oil, and were encouraged to render a “faithful, closely observed depiction of their subject.”⁷ As Arthur Lismer’s (principal from 1916-1919) replacement, Elizabeth Styring Nutt (1870-1946) continued this emphasis on a traditional art education. Principal at the VSAD from 1919 to 1943, it was her training at the Sheffield School of Art that she brought to Halifax; and her own works of naturalistically rendered landscapes reflect this training. Nutt expressed her fondness for the British tradition in a radio broadcast on Canadian art in 1934, stating, “England was the birthplace of the consciousness of the beauty of naturalism in landscape painting.”⁸ She was also an advocate for art education, having published many writings on the subject while still living in Sheffield, such as “Artists, All of Us” published in *My Magazine* and her 1916 book “*Significance*” or *Flower Drawing with Children*. According to historians Donald Soucy and Harold Pearse, it was her affinity for the English tradition that “made her lean more toward these notions of applied art [rather] than ... toward 20th century modern art trends emanating from France,”⁹ and which further characterizes the influence of the VSAD on the nature of art production in Nova Scotia.

The Art Department at Mount Allison University (MTA) also exerted a strong influence on art. Under the direction of John Hammond (1843-1939) and with the

⁷ Soucy and Pearse, *The First Hundred Years*, 53.

⁸ Elizabeth Nutt, “Canadian Art,” printed transcript of National Council of Education radio broadcast, 20 November 1934. 2nd edition, unpaginated, quoted in Stacey and Wylie. *Eighty/Twenty*, 60.

⁹ Soucy and Pearse, *The First Hundred Years*, 83.

founding of the Owens Museum of Fine Art in 1895, the art department at MTA gained a prominent place in the art history of the Maritime Provinces and Canada as a whole. Appointed the director of the art department in 1893, Hammond oversaw the transfer of the Owens Institute of Fine Art from Saint John, NB, to the new sandstone building on the campus of Mount Allison.¹⁰ It was in 1884 that Hammond was hired to assist in the development of the *teaching* collection for the Owens Institute in Saint John. Once transferred to Sackville, due to financial difficulties, the collection became the basis of the art department at Mount Allison.¹¹ As historian John Reid has written in a history of Mount Allison University: “by virtue of acquiring the services of John Hammond, even more than by securing the Owens collection, Mount Allison became an important centre of the fine arts in the Maritimes.”¹² Hammond was a member of the Royal Canadian Academy and had painted for a short time in Europe with J.M. Whistler and Jean François Millet. His work has often been compared to J.M.W. Turner, for his own subtle use of tone and colour.¹³

Prior to John Hammond’s appointment and the transference of John Owens’ collection to Mount Allison, students were under the guidance of English landscape painter John Warren Gray (1824-1912). Appointed the first professor of drawing and painting at the ladies college in 1869, Gray’s teaching philosophy closely followed his

¹⁰ The Owens Institute of Fine Art was founded in Saint John, NB, by the prosperous ship builder John Owens.

¹¹ The collection itself was comprised mainly of sketches, watercolours and paintings of nineteenth century British art, a small collection of French, Italian and Canadian artists as well as copies of old masters. [John Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963*, vol. 1: 1843-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 209.]

¹² Ibid., 210.

¹³ Ibid., 209-10.

own European training: “The method of instruction is that employed in the best European schools. Copying, under the eye of a skillful teacher, is regarded as the first means of acquiring correct ideas of the Arts; but, from the beginning, the pupil will be taught that Nature is [the] ultimate guide, and as early as possible will be accustomed to make studies and sketches directly from natural forms.”¹⁴ Thus, both the VSAD and the art department at Mount Allison can be characterized by their close adherence to notions of a traditional European art education. With landscape painters trained in the British school largely responsible for instruction at these institutions, it is no surprise that romantic images of the rural landscape and coastal seascapes can be characterized as the dominant aesthetic in the Maritime region (Figs. 1 & 2)

Aside from the VSAD and the Owens Museum of Fine Art, opportunities to view art in the region in the early decades of the 20th century were limited. As Maritime historian and physician John Clarence Webster, appointed Chairman of the Canadian Carnegie Corporation committee, wrote in his 1926 study *The Distressed Maritimes*: “In the Maritimes ... cultural development is almost entirely wanting... Art is practically non-existent. There is little appreciation for it in any form. There is no market for paintings, etchings, engraving or sculpture, not a single public collection of any importance.”¹⁵ In the Maritime region the presence of formal or professional art museum space was lacking. In New Brunswick, the general public could take in exhibitions at the Owens Museum of Fine Art in Sackville (1895) or at the New Brunswick Museum (NBM) in Saint John (1930). In Nova Scotia there was the collection of the Nova Scotia

¹⁴ John Warren Gray quoted in *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁵ Clarence Webster, *The Distressed Maritimes: A Study of Educational and Cultural Conditions Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1926), 12.

Museum of Fine Arts (NSMFA); although an established organization since 1908, the NSMFA would not find a permanent home in the city until the 1960s. Its aims were to encourage fine art within the Province: “by the collecting of pictures and other works of art for purposes of exhibition; to hold exhibitions of pictures; ... and by any means give the public opportunities of seeing good Art, and cultivating an interest in the art of this country and of other countries.”¹⁶ In Prince Edward Island, it was not until 1928 that the Robert Harris Memorial Art Gallery was established in Charlottetown.

In addition to these formal institutions, local artist groups also arranged for exhibitions. These groups took the form of city based or province wide groups and offered local artists a platform for the arts by providing exhibition venues, working groups and various other opportunities. For example, as early as 1910 the Saint John Art Club was dedicated to the showing of traveling exhibitions. However, arrangements for these shows were sporadic at best, according to Webster, “Loan exhibitions, even, are so infrequent as to be almost unknown.”¹⁷ In 1913 the first documented loaned exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Canada was sent to the Maritimes and was hosted by the Saint John Art Club, NB.¹⁸ The next documented occasion a collection of works from the NGC was sent to the region was in November of 1917, this time it was sent to Halifax under the auspices of the NSMFA. This exhibition included a selection of lithographs from the Senefelder Club of London, England, as well as a collection of small paintings and sketches by members of the Ontario Society of Artists (OSA). Works by

¹⁶ Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts, Halifax, Catalogue of Exhibition of Painting by Canadian Artists, Loaned by the National Gallery of Canada (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts, 1917), 4.

¹⁷ Webster, *The Distressed Maritimes*, 12.

¹⁸ Garry Mainprize, *National Gallery of Canada: A Hundred Years of Exhibitions* (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1984), 4.

members of the OSA were for sale and included F.M. Bell Smith (1846-1923), Frederick S. Challener (1869-1959), Frank Carmichael (1890-1945), Edmund Wyly Grier (1862-1957), C.W. Jefferys (1969-1951) and A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974).

The following year (1918) an exhibition of paintings from the permanent collection of the NGC was again sent to the region and hosted by both the NSMFA and the Saint John Art Club. This exhibition included the work of artists such as: Marion Long (1882-1970), Charles MacDonald Manly (1855-1924), J.E.H. MacDonald (1873-1932), George Reid (1860-1947), Mary Heiester Reid (1854-1921), Tom Thomson (1877-1917) and Mary E. Wrinch (1877-1969). Interestingly, works belonging to the host organization complemented each showing of this exhibition. In Halifax works belonging to the NSMFA, now in the collection of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, included such artists as Henry M. Rosenberg (1858-1947), former teacher at the VSAD (1898-1910), Frederick S. Challener, George Harvey (1806-1876) and Arthur Lismer (1885-1969), then principal of the VSAD. Those works belonging to the Saint John Art Club, now in the collection of the New Brunswick Museum, included artists such as Clarence Gagnon (1881-1942), Frederick Brigden (1871-1956), Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté (1869-1937) and Helen McNicoll (1879-1915). With only two established museum spaces in the region, traveling exhibitions such as these provided members of the art community the opportunity to see a greater variety of art works than what was available within the Maritimes. Moreover, they functioned as a precursor to NGC exhibitions later circulated throughout the region by the Maritime Art Association.

1.2. *The Founding of the Maritime Art Association*

The nature of art production in the Maritime region in the early 20th century can, in part, be attributed to the influence of a selection of key figures and institutions as discussed above. Since opportunities to view art from within and outside of the region were limited at best, there was minimal exposure to new and progressive art trends. The arrival of Walter Halsey Abell (1897-1956) at Acadia University, Wolfville, NS, in 1927 marks the beginning of a series of events that would significantly alter the character of the Maritime art community.¹⁹ Born in Brooklyn, NY, and raised in Philadelphia, Abell was well versed in the elements of aesthetics and art education, having received a Master's degree in art criticism at Swathmore College, Pennsylvania. His graduating thesis, entitled "Fine Art as an Element in Liberal Education," is illustrative of Abell's philosophy of teaching, which required students to have first hand contact and experience with real art objects in order to fully benefit from the study and development of a language of aesthetic appreciation.²⁰

Upon joining Acadia University, Walter Abell became the corner stone in the establishment of the University's Department of Art and Aesthetics. With its emphasis on aesthetics, rather than the history of art and archeology, it was the first department of its kind in Canada.²¹ Courses such as "The Elements of Beauty," "Beauty in Daily Life,"

¹⁹ The primary texts for my discussion of Walter Abell, Acadia University and the founding of the Maritime Art Association were drawn from: Kirk Niergarth, "Art and Democracy: New Brunswick Artists and Canadian Culture between the Great Depression and the Cold War" PhD dissertation, University of New Brunswick, 2007, and Sandra Paikowsky, "'From Away': The Carnegie Corporation, Walter Abell and American Strategies for Art in the Maritimes from the 1920s to the 1940s," *Journal of Canadian Art History* 27 (2006): 36-75.

²⁰ Kirk Niergarth, "Art and Democracy: New Brunswick Artists and Canadian Culture between the Great Depression and the Cold War" (PhD dissertation, University of New Brunswick, 2007), 87.

²¹ Paikowsky "From Away," 44.

“The Enjoyment of Art” and “Principles of Art Criticism” are illustrative of Abell’s approach to art education and reflect his American training, as well as the influence of major American thinkers. His approach to art education rejected the formerly accepted method of teaching fine art which was, according to Abell, “little more than a loading of [student’s] with facts and dicta.”²² The American art historian Thomas Munro, for example, wrote extensively on the role of aesthetics in a liberal education. Of the student whose education lacked the elements of art appreciation Munro stated: “The natural desire of students to debate aesthetic values is brushed aside as “a matter of personal taste.” Their powers of critical appraisal are thus repressed instead of being developed through the rational analysis, application and discussion of standards. Thus they are left helpless in the face of modern art experiments and critical controversies.”²³ For Abell, schools and universities were the ideal vehicle for the dissemination of aesthetic experience.²⁴

Abell’s aims as an educator, outlined in the 1928 Acadia academic calendar, were to “develop the aesthetic faculties of the student [and general public] so that he may increasingly enjoy the beauties about him in nature and in art.”²⁵ This was in line with ideas held by Frederick P. Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation, who believed

²² Walter Abell, “Fine Arts as an Element of Liberal Education,” (master’s thesis, Swathmore College, 1924), quoted in Niergarth, “Art and Democracy,” 87.

²³ Thomas Munro, “A Psychological Approach to College Art Instruction,” *Parnassus* 5.6 (November 1933): 27.

²⁴ Niergarth, “Art and Democracy,” 87.

²⁵ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 45.

that rather than being anti-aesthetic the general public was rather *unaesthetic*.²⁶

According to Albert C. Barnes (1872-1951), founder of the Barnes Foundation, the ability to experience a work of art, to understand the “distinctive aspects of reality ... in which the artist is interested,” was not innate. Rather, *seeing* is “something which must be learned, and not something which we all do as naturally as we breathe.”²⁷ Correlating the study of art to the study of scientific method, Barnes believed that only once the intentions of the artist are understood can the audience “build up in himself the background and habits of perceptions which will give him admission to the world of aesthetic experience.”²⁸ Abell echoed this sentiment in relation to the MAA in a May 1935 letter to Saint John artist Jack Humphrey (1901-1967): “I believe it will be a constructive force working in the right direction by promoting increased interest in art and by educating public opinion to an understanding of the aims of the modern painter.”²⁹ This is important, for as historian Kirk Niergarth suggests, the influence of the Barnes Foundation seems to have significantly shaped Abell’s educational ideals.³⁰

During completion of his Master’s degree, Abell undertook an independent study with the Barnes Foundation in Marion, Pennsylvania, where he first came into contact with American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1859-1952). Abell’s insistence on a democratic approach to education and emphasis on experience seem to reflect Dewey’s

²⁶ Ibid., 37.

²⁷ Ibid., 44.

²⁸ Ibid., 47.

²⁹ Letter, Walter Abell to Jack Humphrey, May 24, 1935, quoted in Niergarth, “Art and Democracy,” 96, and Paikowsky, “From Away,” 51, NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1.

³⁰ Ibid., 88.

theories on the social and educational value of art, which promoted the democratization of aesthetic experience through a progressive approach to education.³¹ Dewey's philosophy of art as experiential aimed to "restore continuity between refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience."³² Discussing Dewey's philosophy of education, Barnes explained that the knowledge of the art student need not be based in "how men of genius produced immortal masterpieces long ago, but how in the world that his own eyes show him he can discover more and more of what lends color and zest to what he [sees] from day to day."³³ Abell's own assertion of the importance that a student's "study is for the present even when it is of the past.... His contact with works of the past should be for the sake of the pleasure, help or inspiration which these works afford to the present," closely echoes that of Dewey's approach.³⁴

The history of the Maritime Provinces in the first half of the 20th century is also marked by the presence of the American based philanthropic foundation the Carnegie Corporation of New York City, most evident within the realm of higher education.³⁵

³¹ Anna Hudson, "Art and Social Progress: The Toronto Community of Painters, 1933-1950," (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1997), 80.

³² John Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 3rd ed. (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958), 3.

³³ Albert C. Barnes, "John Dewey's Philosophy of Education," in *Art and Education*, 9.

³⁴ Abell, "Fine Arts as an Element of Liberal Education," 73-74, quoted in Niergarth, "Art and Democracy," 87.

Abell's understanding and promotion of the kinds of aesthetic principals espoused in his 1936 publication *Representation and Form* influenced the aesthetic and educational goals of the MAA. Abell believed that representation must be carefully organized within a compositional whole in order for the viewer's mind to fully grasp the intentions of the artist. The beauty of a work of art "was thus the clarification of balance as an essential feature of all harmonious circumstances." [Anna Hudson, "Art and Social Progress: The Toronto Community of Painters, 1933-1950," PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1997, 84.]

³⁵ In 1922 The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching commissioned a study of education in the Maritime region. See: William S. Learned and Kenneth C.M. Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces of Canada* (New York: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1922).

Walter Abell's arrival in the Maritimes, for example, came under the auspices of Frederick P. Keppel (1875-1943) President of the Corporation from 1922 to 1941, as Acadia University was one of four Canadian universities whose Fine Art department was founded through the assistance of Carnegie Corporation funding.³⁶ The Maritimes were a significant focus for the Corporation as they "were effectively isolated from the rest of Canada and had particular education problems."³⁷ It was during this period, according to John Reid, that American philanthropic foundations focused a great deal of attention on Canada's Eastern Provinces, which were regarded as "remote and backward."³⁸

The history of the Carnegie Corporation in the Maritimes is also intimately connected to the development of a united regional community in the arts. While the Corporation was specifically chartered "for the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding," its promotion of arts and culture can be attributed to the influence of Keppel who was president from 1923 to 1941.³⁹ As historian Jeffrey Brison has observed, it was Keppel's own interest in the arts and culture that elevated these fields to the top of the Carnegie Corporation's agenda during his time as president.⁴⁰ Moreover, it was his pursuit of cultural philanthropy that placed the foundation in the position to become a

³⁶ Kirk Niergarth, "Missionary for Culture": Walter Abell, *Maritime Art and Cultural Democracy, 1928-1944*," *Acadiensis* 36 (Autumn 2006): 8. The other three Canadian schools to receive Carnegie funding were the University of Alberta, McMaster University and University of Toronto. Ibid.

³⁷ Stephen Stackpole, *Carnegie Corporation Commonwealth Program 1911-1961* (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1963), 7.

³⁸ John Reid, "Health, Education, Economy: Philanthropic Foundations in the Atlantic Region in the 1920s and 1930s," *Acadiensis* 14.1 (Autumn, 1984): 69.

³⁹ Frederick P. Keppel, "Philanthropic Foundations," *Science* 92.2399 (December 20, 1940): 581.

⁴⁰ Jeffrey Brison, "Cultural Interventions: American Corporate Philanthropy and the Construction of the Arts and Letters in Canada, 1900-1957," (PhD dissertation, Queen's University, 1998), 211.

“decisive influence on the institutional development of American [and Canadian] culture.”⁴¹ This would occur through aesthetic education to develop the “expertise necessary to promote and disseminate wider access to culture,” and “would be accomplished by training future cultural authorities who would function as interpreters to the general public.”⁴² In 1924 Keppel stressed the democratic approach taken by the Corporation: “It must be recognized that education endowments such as the Carnegie Corporation are essentially public.... Grants made by them are matters of public concern and ... should involve the largest possible degree of public participation in what is recognized on all sides to be a cooperative enterprise.”⁴³

The MAA fit the parameters of the Carnegie Corporation. As Walter Abell would later write in the 1937 article “Co-operative Art in the Maritimes”:

Over and above the work accomplished has been the human value of the association to which it has led. Through participation in a common program ... Artists, art teachers, museum directors, and interested laymen have formed personal contacts with each other in an increasingly wider circle. The result is a stimulus and encouragement to all concerned.⁴⁴

Walter Abell’s intentions for the MAA, according to art historian Sandra Paikowsky, were “pure Carnegie: to ensure a wider access to culture, to advocate the development of

⁴¹ Paul DiMaggio, “Support for the Arts from Independent Foundations,” in *Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts: Studied in Mission and Constraint*, ed. Paul DiMaggio (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 115.

⁴² Paikowsky, “From Away,” 38.

⁴³ Frederick Keppel, “General Policies of the Carnegie Corporation,” *Science* 6.1562 (December 5, 1924): 514.

⁴⁴ Walter Abell, “Co-operative Art in the Maritimes,” *Saturday Night*, June 12, 1937.

taste through aesthetic experience, and to constitute a form of public patronage or even philanthropy through art sales.”⁴⁵

Arriving in Nova Scotia shortly before the onset of the Great Depression, Abell acknowledged its affects on his ability to arrange for traveling exhibitions at Acadia: “Then came the depression. For two years we at Acadia were obliged to drop our program of visiting exhibitions.”⁴⁶ It was at this point that Walter Abell partnered with Elizabeth McLeod, director of the art school at Mount Allison University, to bring traveling exhibitions to the region. These exhibitions were acquired from such sources as the American based organizations the College Art Association (1911) and the American Federation of Arts (1909). Abell’s close ties to the Carnegie Corporation no doubt played a significant role in the willingness of these American organizations to lend their exhibitions to these Maritime institutions, as they too received support from this philanthropic foundation. A selection of these exhibitions include *Dutch-Flemish Old Masters* (1934-35) and *Italian Old Masters* (1934-35), from the American Federation of Arts, as well as *Self Portraits in Prints* (1934-35) by sixty contemporary European and American artists and *Oil Painting by Contemporary Artists* (1934-35) from the College Art Association. The latter of which, as Paikowsky has noted, “clearly demonstrates that the region was not quite so isolated from viewing international art as it might proclaim.”⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 51.

⁴⁶ Abell, “Co-operative Art in Maritimes.”

⁴⁷ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 50.

The partnership between Acadia and Mount Allison University informed Abell in his next venture, the amalgamation of resources to overcome the limitations, financial and otherwise, of the visual arts in the Maritime region. As the notion of an organized regional body began to take form, he wrote to H.O. McCurry, then the assistant director of the National Gallery of Canada:

Perhaps it will interest you [to know], in connection with the circulation of [traveling] exhibitions that I am at present approaching various art centers in the Maritimes with a view to determine whether we might affiliate with each other to form a Maritime Art Association.... I have felt that the number and quality of exhibitions could be increased, and in particular more could be done to secure exhibitions of Canadian art, if all the exhibiting centers in the Maritimes were affiliated [in order to] coordinate our activities and provide the several local groups with authoritative information as to the choice of exhibitions available to them. Once started, such an Association could also function in other ways to advance the cause of art in the Maritime Provinces.⁴⁸

In response, McCurry informed Abell that his proposal of a Maritime Art Association was a “scheme which the National Gallery has been anxious to foster for a number of years.”⁴⁹ Moreover, he explained that while Gallery’s loan exhibitions had been circulated throughout Western Canada with marked effect, the response from the Eastern Provinces has been “spasmodic and unsatisfactory.”⁵⁰

McCurry’s desire to foster a relationship with the Maritime Provinces, one that would benefit the NGC, reflects his other role as the Secretary of the Carnegie Corporation’s Canadian Committee located at the National Gallery. This centrality was

⁴⁸ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, October 20, 1934. National Gallery of Canada Archives (NGC), 5.11-M F.1, Maritime Art Association. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁴⁹ Letter, H.O. McCurry Ottawa, ON, to Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, November 2, 1934. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁵⁰ Ibid.

all the more prevalent during the formative years of the MAA, as Brison has written: “in times of economic depression and general lack of support for arts and culture, fledgling regional institutions with limited access to funding and professional expertise had little choice but to follow Ottawa’s lead.”⁵¹ With the intention of regional development through the creation of a complementary infrastructure to serve the NGC, the “general strategy,” Brison argues, “called for solidifying the infrastructural base of a national culture in central Canada while, at the same time developing what was seen by all parties involved in decision-making as a complementary (but subordinate) regional infrastructure.”⁵² As such, the NGC viewed the MAA as an ideal association through which to further enforce its dominance in the production of Canadian culture. As Abell wrote after its formation: “It seems not impossible that the MAA may prove to be the first of a series of regional Art Associations which will be linked together into a national Canadian network through affiliation with the National Gallery.”⁵³

In the fall of 1934, with the assistance of a grant of \$150 from the Carnegie Corporation, Walter Abell and Elizabeth McLeod contacted fourteen groups in eight centers around the Maritime Provinces about the possibility of a Maritime Art Association. These groups, or institutions, included city and province wide art clubs and societies, public schools, colleges, universities, civic groups, art students and any

⁵¹ Brison, “Cultural Interventions,” 221.

⁵² Ibid., 227.

⁵³ Report on Grant. Project for the Formation of a Maritime Art Association. Report for the Year ending June 1935. Project carried out by the Art Department of Acadian University under the Direction of Professor Walter H. Abell. June 15, 1935. Wolfville, 2-3. Carnegie Corporation of New York Records (CCNY), Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries (CU RBMI) Carnegie Corporation Grant Files, Box 211 A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

individual interested in art. In the circular inviting members of the community to join together in the establishment of a *Maritime Art Association* Abell and McLeod stressed the importance of cooperation in their future endeavors:

The number of traveling exhibitions available for display in the Maritime Provinces could be increased, while at the same time the cost[s] of such exhibitions ... would be reduced. The interest in art displayed by the establishment of such an Association, ... would place us in a strong position to appeal to the National Gallery at Ottawa for loan exhibitions of Canadian art to be shown in the Maritimes.⁵⁴

Most importantly, however, was that increased cooperation among art groups in the region would allow for the MAA to organize significant exhibitions of their own. This would take the form of the MAA's annual members exhibition *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, addressed in chapter three.

By the end of the following March 1935, delegates from all interested parties gathered in Saint John, with the intent to unite for co-operative effort in the interest of fostering art in the region. With delegates representing eleven groups from ten different centers around the region, the Maritime Art Association's constitution was ratified. The objectives of the Association were:

To promote a knowledge and appreciation of Art; To foster Art activities in the Maritime Provinces – By uniting for co-operative effort, all interested groups or individuals; By securing and offering for circulation exhibitions of fine and applied arts; By arranging for lectures; By engaging in such other activities as may at any time be felt to promote the general aims stated above.⁵⁵

Membership to the Association was a fee of \$10 and by the end of their first year, 1935-

⁵⁴ Association circular, Proposal for the Establishment of a Maritime Art Association. November 27, 1934. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁵⁵ Maritime Art Association Constitution and By-Laws, 1935. AUASC, Walter Abell Fonds.

36, member-groups represented seventeen bodies in thirteen Maritime centers.⁵⁶ The MAA was thus Canada's first regional art association – comprising groups from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The achievements of the MAA in its “development of art activities in the Maritime Provinces” was cited by Abell in a three-fold manner:

It has united for cooperation the ... principal organizations which carried on independent activities in this field prior to the formation of the Association. It has stimulated three organizations which had not previously done so to include activities connected with art in their programs. And it has led to the formation of two new art societies, these having been formed as a direct result of our publicity and for the express purpose of participating in our program”⁵⁷

MAA programming was, according to Abell, “a big step forward on anything hitherto attempted in the Maritimes as a whole.”⁵⁸ In a letter to Fred Taylor, he later described the MAA as part of “the original Maritime push.”⁵⁹ MAA programming, according to Niergarth, was organized in such a way as to “direct artists and arts organizations toward

⁵⁶ The founding groups were: Acadia University Fine Arts Club, Wolfville, Nova Scotia; Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Lord Amherst Chapter of the I.O.D.E. (Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire), Amherst Nova Scotia; Louisbourg Chapter of the I.O.D.E., Sydney, Nova Scotia; New Glasgow Arts and Letters Club, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia; Nova Scotia College of Art, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Nova Scotia Society of Artists, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Moncton Society of Art, Moncton, New Brunswick; Netherwood School, Rothesay, New Brunswick; Newcastle Art Club, Newcastle, New Brunswick; Provincial Normal School, Fredericton, New Brunswick; Sackville Art Club, Sackville, New Brunswick; St. Andrews Art and Study Club, St. Andrews, New Brunswick; Saint John Art Club, Saint John, New Brunswick; Saint John Vocational School, Saint John, New Brunswick; the newly formed Art Society of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Maritime Art Association, “1935-1936, Member Groups,” Maritime Art Association, <http://maa.concordia.ca>

⁵⁷ Walter Abell, Report of the President. 1935-36. University of New Brunswick Harriet Irving Library (UNBHIL), Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁵⁸ Letter, Walter Abell, Sackville, NB, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, September 8, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁵⁹ Walter Abell to Fred Taylor, April 27 1949, Library and Archives Canada, Fred Taylor Papers, Microfilm H2992, quoted in Neirgarth, “Art and Democracy,” 81.

Abell's democratic cultural ideals."⁶⁰ By creating new opportunities for as many as twelve communities around the Maritime Provinces to view original works of art, MAA programming and circulation of traveling exhibitions helped to establish and expand a public for art in the region, on both a culturally and educationally significant level. Through direct contact with a greater portion of the Maritime population, the fine arts were in a position to become an arena for regional discussion, appreciation and solidarity.

1.3. *The Role of the Art Association*

The role of artist societies, art associations and organizations has played a significant role in the history of the visual arts in Canada. Both professional and amateur, organizations have been formed at various points in Canada's art history in response to the needs of a specific artistic community. For example, in the past art associations have been established in order to provide exhibition opportunities for its members or a specific community of artists, or to expose the general public to new and developing art forms. As the first art association to function on a regional level the MAA stands apart from its provincial counterparts and Canadian art groups contemporary to it. Although this Association's multi-provincial representation would seem to align it more closely with the national art organizations, it differs significantly from them in its community-based representation of geographically disparate groups.

On a national level, examples of artists associations can be seen in the Royal Canadian Academy (1880), the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour (1925) and the Canadian Group of Painters (1933). Founded in 1880, the object of the Royal

⁶⁰ Ibid., 84.

Canadian Academy (RCA) as expressed in its founding constitution was the “encouragement of Design ... and the promotion and support of Education leading to the production of beautiful and excellent work in manufacturers.”⁶¹ National in vision, at its founding the RCA intended to hold exhibitions in the principal cities of the Dominion. However, as art historian Charles Hill has observed, “this proved to be unrealistic ... Lack of suitable exhibiting spaces, costs of transportation, and the inability of the artists to attend annual meetings held so far from home restricted their effort to Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa.”⁶² Moreover, membership to the RCA was reserved for artists of professional standing. Order of membership was divided into principal members limited to forty, known as Academicians of the Canadian Academy, while all others were known as Associates of the Academy and were divided by painters, sculptures, engravers and designers.⁶³

However, by the 1930s the Academy’s role in the development of a progressive Canadian art was in decline, due to its continual rejection of contemporary works.⁶⁴ Less formal, or conservative, than the RCA yet still national in character is the Canadian Group of Painters (CGP). Founded in 1933, the CGP succeeded the Group of Seven and represented twenty-eight artists from across the country. More liberal in its jurying and support of progressive trends, the CGP “remained nonetheless in the control of Toronto

⁶¹ Royal Canadian Academy, *Constitution and Laws of the Canadian Academy of Arts, 1897* (Ottawa: A. Bureau, Printer), 1.

⁶² Charles Hill, “To Found A National Gallery,” *Journal* 36 (March 6, 1980): 4.

⁶³ Royal Canadian Academy, *Constitution and Laws of the Canadian Academy of Arts, 1897*, 4.

⁶⁴ Charles Hill, *Canadian Painting in the Thirties* (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1970), 13.

artists and in its statements continued to express the Group's National bias."⁶⁵ At this time the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour were also gaining a stronger presence within the Canadian art community. With a membership of twenty-six at the time of its formation in 1926, by 1940 the number of members had nearly doubled at forty-three.

What is significant about all three of these artists' societies or groups is their emphasis on a national membership, representing artists from across Canada. However, as was the case with the RCA and the CGP the majority of their activities were restricted to central Canada. Moreover, their membership comprised artists of a strictly professional standing. Their function as an art group was as *exhibiting societies*, providing a platform for their members. While the MAA also acted as a vehicle for the representation of Maritime art and artists through their annual members exhibition *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, their extended programming and community engagement differentiates them from national exhibiting societies. Those art organizations that relate most closely to the MAA in their form and function are the provincial art *associations*. Examples of these include the Art Association of Montreal (1863), the Ontario Society of Artists (1872), The Contemporary Artists Society of Montreal (1939) and the Nova Scotia Society of Artists, which was in fact a member-group of the MAA. As such, it provides the best example of a provincial art group in relation to the Association.

The Nova Scotia Society of Artists (NSSA) was founded in Halifax in 1922.⁶⁶ The main objective of the NSSA was to "foster and promote more interest, and encourage

⁶⁵ Ibid., 12.

⁶⁶ For a study of the Nova Scotia Society of Artists see: Mora Dianne O'Neill, "Nova Scotia Society of Artists: Exhibitions and Members 1922-1972 (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1997).

a higher standard, in the development of the Fine Arts.”⁶⁷ Through its mandate the society aimed to “encourage and foster original and native Art in the Province of Nova Scotia,”⁶⁸ a goal achieved through the organization of lectures by artists from within the Nova Scotian art community, study and working groups, and monthly meetings.⁶⁹ The members also established the tradition of the NSSA annual show, which provided a much needed exhibition venue for artists in the province. Through their annual showing, the NSSA had a strong presence within the Nova Scotian art community. The NSSA, along with the MAA, as art historian Dianne O’Neil has observed, were the only regularly exhibiting bodies in the province.⁷⁰ While both the NSSA and the MAA arranged for annual members exhibitions, *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* was conceived of as a traveling exhibition from its inception, often showing in each community that the MAA represented. It was not until 1946 that the NSSA began to circulate their annual exhibition, but only within the province of Nova Scotia.

Membership to the NSSA required nomination by an existing member and the submission of “an original work of art for the Membership Committee’s inspection.”⁷¹ As is to be expected, the most prominent activity organized by the NSSA was their annual exhibition, which was open to both members and non-members whose entries were

⁶⁷ Nova Scotia Society of Artists, revised Constitution, December 17, 1937. AUASC, 1900:028 Walter Abell Fonds, Maritime Art Association founding. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Sandra Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures: Art in Nova Scotia 1940-1960* (Halifax: Dalhousie University Art Gallery, 1994), 7.

⁷⁰ Mora Dianne O’Neill, “Preface,” *Nova Scotia Society of Artists: Exhibitions and Members 1922-1972* (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1997), viii.

⁷¹ Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures*, 7.

submitted to a jury; although non-members were restricted to two works, NSSA members could submit up to four. While in theory the NSSA represented the entire body of artists in Nova Scotia, in practice it was another story. As Paikowsky has pointed out, poor travel conditions and unpaved roads made traveling a challenge for many members residing outside of Halifax, as a result those members could only attend monthly meetings and exhibitions with great difficulty.⁷² Clearly, those active members residing in the city of Halifax would have greater access to and opportunities with the NSSA. The MAA differs in this respect, as membership to the Association was based solely on individual or group fee. Submission to the MAA's annual exhibition was not determined by membership to the Association. Moreover, by traveling throughout the Maritime Provinces, these exhibitions exposed the audiences of the region to works of art that would otherwise have only reached a very limited audience, such as those of the NSSA annual exhibition.

The Maritime Art Association is unique among art groups in Canada's art history for its inter-provincial representation. While there were many national artists' organizations in Canada that were active at the same time as the MAA, the activities of these societies were for the most part confined to providing exhibition opportunities for their members. The many provincial artist societies, such as the Nova Scotia Society of Artists, are perhaps more similar to the MAA. Like the MAA, these provincial groups expanded their programming to include lectures, working groups and annual members meetings. Both the MAA and the NSSA also placed a great deal of importance on the organization of an annual member's exhibition. However, the MAA's Annual represented

⁷² Ibid.

the work of both professional and amateur artists from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; offering for the first time a comprehensive view of art production in the Maritime Provinces. The MAA is unique in its joining together and mobilization of geographically disparate groups, to form a united regional art community; through their extensive programming of lecture tours, radio talks and a slide collection of works by Maritime artists. However, it is this Association's organization of a traveling exhibition circuit throughout the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island that defines the MAA. Democratic in their approach, the MAA circulated exhibitions to both large and small communities within the Maritime region, the latter of which would not have had the resources to organize such opportunities. Moreover, the MAA exhibition circuit, beginning with the cooperative nature between Acadia and Mount Allison University, greatly increased exposure to new and progressive art forms within the Maritime art community in the early 20th century.

CHAPTER TWO

Maritime Art Association Programming

Between 1935 and 1945 the annual programming of the Maritime Art Association was characterized by two main activities: “securing and offering for circulation exhibitions of fine and applied arts” and “arranging for lectures.”⁷³ Exhibitions borrowed from the National Gallery of Canada and subsequently circulated by the Association, were the primary concern of the MAA. However, other educational activities also played a role, including a lecture series, radio talks on the arts and a slide collection of works by artists of the Maritime Provinces. MAA programming took place from September to May annually, reflecting the “academic year” as a majority of the Association’s active members were representatives of various public and private schools, colleges and universities. In general, programming was organized and mediated by committees of MAA executive members. In this chapter I analyze the first ten years of MAA programming and its context in the Maritimes in order to illustrate the role of this Association in the development of a united regional art community. I also examine the impact of traveling exhibitions in Canada and the United States, funded by the Carnegie Corporation, on MAA ideals and exhibition practices.

2.1. MAA Programming - 1935 to 1945

The MAA’s founding constitution clearly identifies the speaker series as a means to “promote a knowledge and appreciation of art” within the Maritime community. Over the course of the Association’s first ten years, a diverse group of people lectured on

⁷³ Maritime Art Association Constitution and By-Laws, 1935. AUASC, Walter Abell Fonds. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

various aspects of art. They can be divided into two groups, the first being those people from within the Maritime region. These lecturers were generally prominent figures within the community and often members of the MAA executive – those who Abell defined as “qualified to lecture on art or demonstrate art processes.”⁷⁴ The second group comprised those lecturers sent to the region under the auspices of the NGC. Within the scope of this study the 1936-37 programming year offers the most diverse lecture program, with a total of eleven different talks by five individual MAA members and two visiting scholars. However, despite the breadth of lectures offered by these five local members, Saint John artist Violet Gillett (1898-1996) was the only one requested by MAA member-groups.⁷⁵

The first group of lecturers offered to MAA member-groups included Dr. Alfred Bailey (1905-1997), then Assistant Director at the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John, NB. Described by art critic Graham C. McInnes (1912-1970) as “the ideal man to develop an interest in the arts,” Bailey intended to present a survey of Canada’s art history from Champlain to C.W. Jefferys in his lecture titled “The Artist as Historian, With Special Reference To Canada.”⁷⁶ His objective was to question the accuracy of the artist’s eye, while also considering the conventions and methods of the artistic epoch to

⁷⁴ Maritime Art Association. Reports of the President and Treasurer for the Year 1942-43, “Report of the President,” 6. New Brunswick Museum Library and Archives (NBMLA), Julia Crawford (JC) Papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁷⁵ Gillette delivered talks to two MAA groups: the St. Andrew Art and Study Club, Saint Andrews, and the Netherwood School, Rothesay, NB. Walter Abell, Report of the President 1936-37, 2. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁷⁶ Graham Campbell McInnes, “The Maritime Provinces – New Brunswick,” Notes on Art in Canada, Summer 1937, 2. NGC Archives, 5.11 M F.2, Maritime Art Association. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

which their work belonged.⁷⁷ Avery Shaw (1907-1957), a prominent Halifax artist at the time, offered three lectures on the plastic qualities and technical methods of painting. Both his “Technique in Painting” and “Pigments and Permanency” were to include demonstrations. Believing that the “possibilities of many very valuable media are neglected in the Maritimes and indeed in all Canada,” Shaw’s third talk, entitled “The Media of Painting,” concerned various processes from oil to tempera.⁷⁸ Violet Gillett, the head of the Art Department at the Saint John Vocational School, delivered “A Plea for the Furtherance of Art Education in the Public Schools.” Related to the NGC exhibition *Creative Art by Children*, circulated by the MAA that same year, this lecture described the benefits of modern methods of art education in a child’s development. Gillett also offered lectures entitled “Development and History of Letters” and “Modern Art,” the latter intended to explain to the “layman who finds it puzzling” the elements of modern art by discussing the general aims of the artist and their creative motives.⁷⁹ The only lecture that dealt specifically with a Maritime subject was by Dr. Grace Helen Mowat, director of the Charlotte County Cottage Craft, Saint Andrews, NB.⁸⁰ Her lecture, “Development of Native Arts and Crafts in the Maritime Provinces,” was drawn from her own experience working with the women of Charlotte County to revive the art of hooked rugs by developing new artistic designs, drawn from the women’s everyday experience, the craft provided women with a source of income. Mowat’s role in the revival of the

⁷⁷ Association circular, “List of Lectures Available during the Season, 1936-37,” 2. UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁷⁸ “List of Lectures Available during the Season, 1936-37,” 3.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 3.

almost “forgotten arts of spinning, dying and weaving” was featured in the 1941 article “New Brunswick Renaissance,” by Aida B. McAnn, published in *Maritime Art*, an MAA publication and Canada’s first art periodical.⁸¹

As President, Walter Abell was the most prominent MAA representative to lecture everywhere within the Maritime region and during the first year of active programming, 1935-36, he was the principle lecturer. With funding received from the NGC, Abell traveled to each center where the MAA was represented, touching on issues of art appreciation and modern art. Describing a possible lecture to H.O. McCurry, he wrote:

One ... to be called “The Meaning of Modern Art,” would aim to explain to general audiences what the modern movement in painting has been trying to accomplish. It would begin with some of the 19th century academic art and indicate why that was felt to be lacking, would then trace some of the experiments made by the creative modern artists, and would conclude by way of indicating why these experiments are in line with the best work of older periods in their creative urge and their searching for fine qualities of design.⁸²

Although Abell did not offer the lecture described above he did present “A Key to Art,” which was “addressed particularly to those whose acquaintance with the subject [of art and aesthetics was] limited.”⁸³ “A Key to Art” attempted to explain the basic principles of art production, highlighting overall design as the most important element. Described

⁸¹ Aida B. McAnn, “New Brunswick Renaissance,” *Maritime Art* 1.3 (February 1941): 13. For information pertaining to *Maritime Art* see: Steven McNeil, *Maritime Art: Canada’s First Art Magazine, 1940-43* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, 2002); Sandra Paikowsky, “From Away”: The Carnegie Corporation, Walter Abell and American Strategies for Art in the Maritimes from the 1920s to the 1940s,” *Journal of Canadian Art History* 27 (2006): 36-75; Julia Scalzo, “Walter Abell: From *Maritime Art* to Canadian Art,” *Vanguard* (February – March 1987): 20-23.

⁸² Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, September 23, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1, Maritime Art Association. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁸³ “Art Lecture Scheduled for Wednesday Night,” *Charlottetown Guardian*, January 27, 1936, 5.

by Abell as “any grouping or combination of elements that gives rise to any significant relationship,” the success of any work of art lay in its design: “We all begin by liking pictures for the subject matter but as we study we find a great many beauties about a picture that may come to mean even more to us than the subject.”⁸⁴ Abell also lectured on “Twentieth Century Architecture,” which he described to McCurry as illustrating some of the “striking developments” of recent architecture and raising questions of “creative originality in architecture as contrasted with the more academic and imitative traditions.”⁸⁵ Tracing its development from the Renaissance on, Abell further explored this topic from a practical point of view by considering what advantages might be gained by accepting the modern style in homes and public buildings, as oppose to traditional or conventional designs.

The following year, 1936-37, Abell again offered these two lectures with the addition of “New Directions in Canadian Paintings.” The latter was based on Abell’s summer research in Toronto and Montreal, when he had visited the studios of those young artists who were “bringing creative stimulus to Canadian art.”⁸⁶ Offered in conjunction with the NGC exhibition the *Canadian Group of Painters*, Abell described new forms of Canadian art that illustrated elements of modernist traditions.⁸⁷ The benefit of these lectures to the art community, given in association with NGC traveling

⁸⁴ Walter Abell quoted in “Interesting Art Lecture by Prof. Abell,” *Charlottetown Guardian*, January 30, 1936, 3.

⁸⁵ Letter, Abell to McCurry, September 23, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11 M F.2, Maritime Art Association. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁸⁶ “List of Lectures Available during the Season, 1936-37,” 1. UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁸⁷ Ibid.

exhibitions, was that they were thought to arouse a “great interest among the students and the general population.”⁸⁸ The Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire in Amherst, NS, for example, felt that the opportunity of a public lecture on art “was a great stimulus to the awakening of [an] art consciousness in the community and an excellent means of launching the exhibition program.”⁸⁹

During the 1938-39 programming year Abell also delivered a lecture entitled “Some Canadian Moderns” to the members of the Nova Scotia Society of Artists. This lecture was drawn from an article of the same title published in the July 1937 issue of the American periodical *Magazine of Art*, and had introduced to American audiences a new generation of Canadian artists. The work of these Canadian modernists, Abell wrote, was a conscious moving away from an artistic practice “dominated by an enthusiasm for rugged native landscape [toward a] new generation of Canadian painting ... belong[ing] less to the stylistic descendants of the Group of Seven than those who pursue the Groups spirit of independent exploration.”⁹⁰ The Canadian artists that Abell identified as “moderns” were: Pegi Nicol (1904-1949), Betram Brooker (1888-1955), Marina Goodier (1906-1994), Lillian Freiman (1908-1986), Emily Carr (1871-1945), Aleksandre Bercovitch (1892-1951), Carl Schaefer (1903-1995), David Milne (1882-1953) and from the Maritime Provinces, Jack Humphrey (Figs. 3, 4 & 5). Of Saint John artist Humphrey, Abell wrote: “Subject matter, as such, is incidental to Humphrey’s work to the search for

⁸⁸ Minutes of the Second Annual Meeting of the Maritime Art Association, 13-14 May 1937, 3. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁸⁹ Letter, Walter Abell to H.O. McCurry, February 7, 1936. Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS), Elizabeth Strying Nuttt, Maritime Art Assocation Scrapbook. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁹⁰ Walter Abell, “Some Canadian Moderns,” *Magazine of Art* 30.7 (July 1937): 423, 426.

“form.” Yet there is one subject from which he has drawn such personal effects that it seems part of his vision. That subject is the provincial city.... Out of Saint John, he has distilled a mood, an epoch, a flavor of life.”⁹¹

The scope of Walter Abell’s lectures indicate his desire to expand the current discourse of art in the Maritime region to include international trends, both historical and modern, as well as the current developments within national borders and the traditions that ground Canadian art history. Abell believed the subject of Canadian art history to be “new and only partially explored,” and that, “much remain[ed] to be done in studying its different aspects.”⁹² His aspiration to expand the subject of Canadian art is reflected in the academic curriculum in the Art Department at Acadia University. In 1939 Abell introduced the course *Canadian Culture in the Visual Arts* which grew out of the opinion that a University education must give the student “not only a knowledge of the great traditions and modern developments of other lands, but a sense of the artistic accomplishments of their own land. Every country has its own traditions and possibilities in the field of art, and these must be recognized, studied, and appreciated if a genuine national culture is to develop.”⁹³ Abell felt that in providing and exposing the young

⁹¹ Ibid., 426.

At the Association’s Annual Meetings, there was often a round table discussion that took place between the public and MAA delegates and often reflected Association programming. At the first annual meeting 1935-36, there was an open discussion on the topic of “Attitudes Toward Modern Art”; at the second annual meeting, 1936-37, the topic was “The Value of Art in Modern Life”; at the third annual meeting, 1937-38, the topic was “Art and It’s Relation to the Community”; at the fourth annual meeting, 1938-39, the topic was “Art and Society: What Can They Give Each Other?” However, there were two occasions that Walter Abell offered a lecture. For example, in 1938-39, Abell lectured on “Recent Trends in World Culture and Their Application to the Maritime Provinces,” and at the fifth annual meeting, 1939-40, he offered “Colonial Architecture in the Maritimes.” [Maritime Art Association, <http://maa.concordia.ca>]

⁹² Minutes, Maritime Art Association Annual Meeting, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, May 23-25, 1940, 15. UNBHIL. Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

⁹³ Ibid.

student to the real art object, this experience would ultimately be reflected in that student's participation in the consumption, and therefore support, of works by the Nation's artists. Thus, providing a basis for Canadian culture and a modern Canadian art, to flourish. This was a testament to Abell's affiliation with the Carnegie Corporation and its educational and philanthropic philosophies.

In addition to lectures delivered by members of the MAA, the Association also acted as the agency for lecturers brought to the region under the auspices of the NGC. In the 1936-37 programming year Dr. Julius Held (1905-2002), Professor of Art at New York University, formerly of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, offered a lecture entitled "Great Masters of the Netherlands and Germany." Focusing on the work of Rembrandt, the talk was delivered to audiences in Saint John, Halifax and Wolfville. In Saint John over 700 people attended, prompting Held to write to H.O. McCurry, following his tour in the Maritimes: "I had, from personal comments and from the reaction in the press, the distinct impression, that many people welcomed the opportunity, to get away from the cheap forms of entertainment which usually fills their hours of leisure, and to derive more lasting values from the acquaintance with works of great art."⁹⁴ Eric Newton (1893-1965), an English artist and art critic, also visited three Maritime centers - Halifax, Saint John and Sackville - where he delivered "Modern Art." Newton explained to audiences that at any point in history every great artist has been considered modern "but past generations were not as surprised, puzzled or shocked by the

⁹⁴ Letter, Julius Held to H.O. McCurry n.d. received Jun 7 1937. NGC Archives, 7.4-H F.2, Julius Held Files Outside activities/organizations. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

modernism of their artists' as the 20th century world finds itself today."⁹⁵ He continued by stating that if modern art were "all wrong" it would be the first time in the history of art that "a generation of artists has failed."⁹⁶ Rather, the public's discontent was due to the fact that they had fallen out of step with art's progress and were still "stumbling around, unable to grasp the new art that depicts the way artists feel about things."⁹⁷ Although well received, following his tour, Newton remarked: "I shall be glad to leave the Maritimes. The people are hard and puritanical. Neither the breezy gusto of the Prairies nor the worldliness of the eastern towns. And not a bit welcoming."⁹⁸

Although Abell had attempted to secure Arthur Lismer for the 1935-36 lecture series, it was only in 1940 that he traveled to the Maritimes under the auspices of the MAA.⁹⁹ Traveling to Halifax, Wolfville, Saint John, Sackville and Charlottetown, PEI, Lismer delivered "Art and the Community." Promoting a democratic approach to the arts, Lismer explained that in order for art to be a genuine and vital aspect of daily life, it must

⁹⁵ "Meaning of Modern Art Described by Noted Critic: Eric Newton, Art Critic of Manchester Guardian, is Heard in an Interesting Address at Dalhousie Chemistry Theatre," *Halifax Chronicle*, February 18, 1937, 16.

⁹⁶ "Says Art is Manner of Looking at Life," *The Evening Times Globe (Saint John) Saint John Times Globe*, February 20, 1937, 4.

⁹⁷ "Meaning of Modern Art Described by Noted Critic," *Halifax Chronicle*, 16.

⁹⁸ Eric Newton, *The Diary of English Art Critic Eric Newton: On a North American Lecture Tour in 1937*, ed. John Stuart Batts (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), 35. Of his time in Sackville, Newton wrote: "[Mount Allison] Daren't have a nude model so they pose for each other in bathing costumes. [Stanley] Royle a good painter but knows nothing about teaching and has been using ... my BBC booklet as his text books, so my evening lecture to the university students (young and wildly enthusiastic) must have been curiously familiar to the 25." While of Halifax artists Avery Shaw, Newton remarked: "He is a cynical progressive with a vast knowledge of art and an unending flow of high-brow conversation. If his picture of Halifax, isn't coloured with his own bitterness, it's going to be a grim place; but I suspect Mr. Shaw of talking for effect. Anyway, it seems clear that Mr. Shaw is the only person who cares whether I'm here or not." *Ibid*, 33-4.

⁹⁹ Arthur Lismer, as former principle of the Victoria School of Art from 1916 to 1919, was by no means a stranger to the art community in the Maritimes, in the way that Eric Newton or Julius Held was.

emerge from a “community life and a community spirit.”¹⁰⁰ He further emphasized the limits of Canadian culture with regard to the support of the nation’s artists and creative aspirations: “Our art has not been given the opportunity it might have had because we still consider art a culture that is collected and then stored away in attractive galleries. [Our culture] should be an expression of the creative instincts of all.”¹⁰¹

In addition to Lismer, the painter André Biéler (1896-1989) also toured the region in 1942, with engagements in Halifax, Wolfville, Saint John, Sackville and Charlottetown. What is particularly interesting about Biéler’s lecture tour is the variety of lectures delivered. In Sackville he spoke on the various aspects of idealism and realism in art, using the work of Goya and Picasso as illustrations of these movements. In Saint John, he offered “Mexican and Canadian Art,” which highlighted the differences between the socially conscious art of the Mexican muralists and Canada’s landscape tradition. In a review of this lecture, Jack Humphrey described Biéler as the man “most responsible for recognizing the timeliness of the trend and for extensively preparing and organizing creative artists to meet it.”¹⁰² In Halifax, Wolfville and Sackville, Biéler spoke on “American Renaissance in Art,” which traced the development of the contemporary

¹⁰⁰ “Famous Artist Lectures Here. Arthur Lismer, Director of Education, National Gallery of Canada, Gives Two lectures at Acadia,” *The Acadian*, March 7, 1940, 10.

¹⁰¹ “Art, Community Lecture Theme. Arthur Lismer, of National Gallery, Ottawa, Speak at Sackville” *Saint John Telegraph Journal* March 2, 1940, 16. In Lismer’s report for the NGC, following his tour in the Maritimes, he expressed his opinion of the MAA: “My objection, if any, to art association’s such as the Maritime Art Association is that it is concerned with exhibitions and paintings. This is perfectly legitimate but insufficient. The artists have desired and have earned the right for their work to be seen, especially as we in Canada are rapidly developing a regionalistic idea of art, (owing to the neglect of the west of the east in official matters in art). But this sort of “aesthetic tourism” is not the real aim of art appreciation. It narrows the field. It becomes provocative of inter-provincial rivalries. It develops a class-consciousness in individuals.” [Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA), P6/D File D12, Arthur Lismer Fonds.] (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁰² Jack Humphrey, “Predicts Future for Art,” *Saint John Times Globe*, February 6, 1942, 16.

movement in American art. Citing the Depression as the root source of this trend, Biéler explained that artists “became [more] socially conscious and painted the life around them in the only manner possible, drab colours and the purposeful distortion, to give emphasis to the subject matter.... Out of the barren soil of this economic collapse grew the flower of the American Renaissance.”¹⁰³ Founded at the height of an extended regional Depression, the same could be said for the MAA in the Maritime Provinces.

The MAA also attempted to give radio broadcasts on the arts, as a way to reach a broader audience; the idea likely originated with Abell who had previously participated in a series of radio talks organized through Acadia University.¹⁰⁴ It is possible that the model for these radio broadcasts were similar to shows in Britain, as Abell had, in fact, inquired with McCurry about the possibility of obtaining some English transcripts as a reference. What interested Abell was what subjects were covered and how the material was organized, “whether historical, biographical, or more critical in nature.”¹⁰⁵ Although Abell had intended to focus on international content – “with a view toward making the talks an introduction ... to all the basic values of art in its different manifestations” – McCurry was adamant that content be based on works belonging to the NGC: “Reconsidering the matter since receiv[ing] your letter, I am inclined to believe that a very satisfactory experiment could be made entirely on the basis of the National Gallery

¹⁰³ Leroy Zwicker, “Growth of Art traced in Lecture,” *Halifax Star* January 31, 1942, 3.

¹⁰⁴ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 67.

¹⁰⁵ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, May 7, 1935. NGC Archives, 7.4 C. Carnegie Corporation – NB – MAA. Outside activities/organizations. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

reproductions.”¹⁰⁶ McCurry had envisioned these radio talks be based at Acadia University and broadcast throughout the region with a “Maritime hook-up,” but its system was inadequate for regional broadcasting. The Canadian Radio Commission was approached as the ideal means, and in the end the talks were broadcast by the CBC in Halifax.¹⁰⁷ In the spring of 1941, Abell delivered a five-week series of radio talks focusing on Canadian art production - *Epochs in Canadian Art*. Arranged chronologically, the series traced the development of Canadian art history from Canada’s First Nations through to 20th century modernism: “Art Before the White Man,” “Decline in the Nineteenth Century,” “Art and the Sailing Ship,” and “Art in Canada Today.” It is likely that “Art and the Sailing Ship” was particularly relevant to the history of art production in the Maritimes.¹⁰⁸

In their effort to further the interest of art in the Maritime region, the MAA also organized a collection of colour kadachrome images of works by artists of the Maritime Provinces. It was first suggested at the 1942-43 annual meeting that the Association undertake the task of assembling such a collection of lantern slides, to be made available to any art group within the region. It was later decided that any artist included in this reference collection had to have participated four or more times in the MAA annual members exhibition, *Painting by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*. The work of deceased Maritime artists was also included, such as Elizabeth Nutt, John Hammond, and George

¹⁰⁶ Letter, Walter Abell, to H.O. McCurry, March 13, 1935. NGC Archives 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁰⁷ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 70.

¹⁰⁸ “Association News – Broadcasts on Canadian Art,” *Maritime Art* 1.4 (April 1941): 27. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate transcripts for these talks.

Horn Russell (1861-1933).¹⁰⁹ In 1945 approximately forty full colour slides were put into circulation, along with projector and screen, and were accompanied by a short pamphlet providing information about the artists and their work, “and whatever might add to the interest of the showings.”¹¹⁰ However, unlike the exhibition commentaries, which will be discussed later in the chapter, these texts did not offer any guide to aesthetic appreciation. The MAA would eventually have three collections of slides for loan: a set of 44 slides of paintings by Nova Scotian artists, a set of 44 slides of paintings by artists from New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and a set of 31 slides illustrating the development of art in Halifax from 1759 to 1921.

Nevertheless, the primary preoccupation of MAA programming was the traveling exhibition circuit. With the formation of the Association in 1935, and with the desire to bring greater Canadian content to the region, the NGC became the sole source of exhibitions for the MAA; it was the only institution that circulated exhibitions across the country. Implicit in the use of National Gallery exhibitions was the understanding that the MAA would no longer seek exhibitions from the America Federation of Arts or College Art Association, as the NGC was not open to competition on home turf. Aware that the NGC and McCurry, as Secretary of the Carnegie Corporation’s Canadian Committee located at the NGC, were influential allies for the fledgling Association, Abell asserted that: “in beginning our program as an Association ... we want to use Canadian resources

¹⁰⁹ Minutes, Maritime Art Association Annual Meeting, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, May 30 – June 1, 1946. Public Archives of Prince Edward Island (PAPEI), Acc no. 3859 File 12 MAA Fonds, Administrative Papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹¹⁰ “Minutes of Annual Meeting, Maritime Art Association,” *Maritime Art Association Bulletin* 1.5 (June 1944): 6. Moncton Society of Art Archives Muriel Wilbur’s House (MSAAMWH), 32 Mitchner, Moncton. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

as fully as possible.”¹¹¹ The traveling exhibition program at the National Gallery of Canada was inaugurated in 1913 with *Loan Exhibition of Paintings from the National Gallery of Canada*, seen in the Maritimes under the auspices of the Saint John Art Club.¹¹²

However, the MAA was the first Canadian art group to organize a regional touring circuit. As then President John Meagher (from 1937-1942) remarked in 1938: “The National Gallery may be termed the Mecca and Shrine of Canadian Art but all cannot journey there. The Maritime Art Association is bringing the National Gallery to the public and devotion to Art is thereby increased.”¹¹³ The NGC’s loan exhibition program is an illustration of its desire to expand the audience for Canadian art. However, implying that it be the only lending institution used by the MAA, reiterated and strengthened the centrality of the art institution in Canada’s art history.¹¹⁴

Annually the MAA borrowed, on average, five exhibitions from the NGC. The members of the MAA wanted these exhibitions to “give as full a range as possible in relation to popular appeal.... They should not stress conservatism or modernism, but

¹¹¹ Letter, Walter Abell, Sackville, NB, to H.O. McCurry, September 8, 1935. NGC Archives 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹¹² Mainprize, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 4,5. Traveling exhibitions from the NGC were utilized by art groups, art associations, museums and universities throughout Canada, such as: the Vancouver Art Gallery; the Calgary Public Museum; the Women’s Art Association in Regina and Moose Jaw; Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario; McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario; the Art Association of Montreal and The Arts Club of Montreal, for example.

¹¹³ John. N. Meagher, Maritime Art Association: Presidents Report, May 26, 1938, 5. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹¹⁴ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 51.

consistently show that which is considered the best in both fields.”¹¹⁵ The average length of each showing varied between ten and fourteen days. However, in 1936-37 the length of all eleven engagements of the *Canadian Group of Painters* exhibition was restricted to five days each, as the exhibition was only available from the NGC as of 15 December. The centers most consistently engaged with MAA exhibitions were Halifax, Saint John and Fredericton, as well as the smaller but equally active centers of Charlottetown, Sackville, Wolfville and Sydney, NS. While the communities of Amherst, NS, and Newcastle, NB, varied from year to year in their level of exhibition engagement. For example, in 1936-37 Newcastle hosted all seven exhibitions, the following year in 1937-38 it only hosted two. Since all aspects of MAA programming were carried out on a voluntary basis, shorter exhibition dates and inactivity of some member-groups can be explained by the lack of resources available to the smaller centers.¹¹⁶

The history of borrowing exhibitions from the NGC between 1935 and 1945 was plagued with issues, including: acknowledgement of the NGC in the press in relation to exhibitions borrowed; access to lists of available NGC exhibitions; obtaining exhibition requests from MAA member-groups; exhibition and transportation fees; and the care and handing of NGC art works while under the responsibility of MAA member-groups. For example, the 1937-38 exhibition year was delayed due to the fact that as of 9 October 1937, John Meagher was still in negotiations with H.O. McCurry over the price of available exhibitions. The issue was eventually settled with the National Gallery

¹¹⁵ Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of The Maritime Art Association, May 21-22, 1936, 2. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹¹⁶ For example, the I.O.D.E. Amherst chapter hosted only two exhibitions each year for 1935-36, 1936-37 and 1937-38. And while the New Glasgow Arts and Letters Club hosted five exhibitions in 1935-36, they hosted none the next year and only one the following year, 1937-38.

charging a “flat [fee] of \$5.00 for each showing of each exhibition”; however, as McCurry explained it was “with the understanding that you will arrange as many showings as possible for each collection.”¹¹⁷ Exhibitions were often made available to the MAA for little more than the cost of insurance, which ranged from between five and ten dollars for each exhibition engagement.¹¹⁸

In an attempt to address the continuing issues surrounding the borrowing and circulation of exhibitions from the NGC, Walter Abell created the position within the MAA of Exhibition Director in 1943: “A need for greater efficiency in circulating our exhibitions has been felt by many of our member groups for several years. Time has often been lost, expense involved, and inconvenience experienced because of a lack of a sufficiently definite schedule.”¹¹⁹ Violet Gillett was the first to fill the role of Exhibition Director, followed by Ellis Roulsten, of Sackville. In the October 1943 publication of the *MAA Bulletin*, which replaced *Maritime Art*, Roulsten asked that each group designate an Exhibition Supervisor. “Very frequently in the past,” wrote Roulsten, “we have had complaints from the National Gallery about their collections being damaged due to poor packing.” The Exhibition Supervisor was to be responsible for the unpacking and

¹¹⁷ Letter, H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, to John Meagher, Halifax, NS, October 28, 1937. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹¹⁸ There were also instances where exhibitions requested from the NGC were no longer available for circulation within the Maritime region. This was due to member-groups waiting as late as October or November of the programming year to send their list of desired exhibitions to the MAA executive. For example, in 1940-41, John Meagher, then president, told MAA members that by the time they sent in their exhibition requests it was discovered that the “two leading [National] Gallery Exhibitions were engaged in other parts of Canada. [...] Our groups are in a large measure responsible inasmuch as in some cases they delayed in selecting their exhibitions until it became necessary to place these exhibitions otherwise than with the Maritime Art Association.” [John Meagher, “To the Members of the Maritime Art Association,” Sixth Annual Meeting of the Maritime Art Association, May 22-24, 1941. PAPEI Acc no. 3859 File 8, Maritime Art Association Fonds.] (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹¹⁹ Walter Abell, Maritime Art Association: Current Activities. No. 1, February 16, 1943, 1. Mount Allison University Archives (MAUA), 7654/8. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

packing of all exhibitions “and should be willing to sign a form that will be sent with the exhibits, to the effect that he or she has supervised such work.”¹²⁰ McCurry continually vocalized his dissatisfaction regarding the frequency with which the works belonging to the NGC incurred damage while touring the Maritime region. As a result, members were frequently reminded that it was essential to handle these exhibitions with the greatest care possible, as the continued borrowing of exhibitions from the NGC was dependent upon it.

In 1935-36, the Association’s first year of active programming, the exhibitions acquired from the NGC consisted of *Twenty-five Canadian Oil Paintings from the Permanent Collection of the National Gallery of Canada*, *Contemporary Prints from Czechoslovakia*, *British Travel Posters*, and *Modern French Painting in Color Reproductions*. It is interesting to note that the exhibition *Contemporary Prints from Czechoslovakia*, was first put into circulation in 1929 and had traveled throughout Western and Central Canada before coming to the Maritime Provinces in 1935. In fact, the majority of exhibitions borrowed from the NGC consistently traveled to Western Canada before they were sent East to the MAA.

The exhibition *Twenty-five Canadian Oil Paintings from the Permanent Collection of the National Gallery of Canada*, provided viewers with a survey of the dominant trends in Canadian art from the late 19th century to artists practicing in the 1930s. The works in this show illustrate the conservative, traditional and modernist trends in Canadian art. For example, there were those artists whose work reflected the academic tradition exemplified by the RCA, such as Franklin Brownell’s (1857-1946) *Golden Age* (1916) and Mary E. Wrinch’s *The Little Bridge* (1915) and works that were less academic

¹²⁰ Ellis Rouston, “Exhibitions,” *MAA Bulletin* 1.1 (October 1943) 10. MSAAMWH. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

but still traditional in approach, such as Maurice Cullen's (1866-1934) *March Evening* (1922) and Clarence Gagnon's *Street Scene, Quebec at Night* (1917) (Figs. 6 & 7). Also included were works by those artists who led the way in Canadian modernist painting, such as A. Y. Jackson's *Night, Georgian Bay* (1913) and Arthur Lismer's *Winter Camouflage* (1918), likely painted during his time in Halifax as the principle of the Victoria College of Art (Fig. 8 & 9). Lismer's work is significant among this collection as it is illustrative of a maritime subject; Halifax Harbor was a major port for the departure of ships during both the First and Second World War.

The reception of this exhibit within the Maritime art community demonstrates the two schools of aesthetic thought that dominated the region: traditionalism and modernism. As PEI architect James E. Harris wrote to H.O. McCurry in 1936, "I have much pleasure in ... the Exhibition of Canadian Oil Painting ... Needless to say I do not agree with all the paintings sent, as I still prefer the Cullens, Gagnons and Coburns, and possibly have not risen to the Lismers and Lawren Harrises."¹²¹ However, as expressed in a review of the exhibition in the *Charlottetown Guardian*, there were those who felt that while artists such as William Henry Clapp (1879-1954), Franklyn Brownell and Robert Harris (1849-1919) "excelled in their craft and produced fine pictures, ... it was given to a later group to fulfill their dreams and give to us a purely Canadian scenery in a style peculiarly suited to the atmosphere and landscape of Canada."¹²² The later group referring to those members of the Group of Seven represented.

¹²¹ Letter, James. E. Harris, Charlottetown, PEI, to H. O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, February 18, 1936. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹²² "Art Exhibition Features Work of Canadian Painters," *Charlottetown Guardian*, February 15, 1936, 3.

The exhibitions of Canadian content borrowed from the NGC further illustrate the extent to which artists from the Maritime Provinces showed on a national level. For example, Avery Shaw was represented in the 1937 *Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour Annual Exhibition* with three works. While in the 1944 *Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour Traveling Exhibition*, Helen Beals (1898-1991), of Wolfville, Halifax painter Leroy Zwicker (1906-1987), and Saint John artists Julia Crawford (1896-1968) and Jack Humphrey were all represented.¹²³ As the only member of the Canadian Group of Painters from the Maritime Provinces, Humphrey was represented in the 1942 exhibition of the Group circulated by the MAA in the 1943-44 exhibition year. Along with fellow Saint John artist Miller Brittain (1912-1968), Humphrey was also included in the 1942 traveling exhibition *The Canadian Society of Graphic Art. The Royal Canadian Academy Traveling Exhibitions*, the most regularly occurring shows within the Maritime region, frequently exhibited the works of Maritime artists. For example, the 1939 RCA traveling exhibition circulated by the NGC included Sackville artist Frank D. Allison (1883-1951) and Halifax artist, and Associate RCA member, Stanley Royle (1888-1961). Work by Royle was also included in the 1941, 1942 and 1943 RCA traveling exhibitions. His paintings represented the dominant subject matter of much Nova Scotian art of this period – i.e. the Province's South Shore and mythic Peggy's Cove; including his works *Mid-day Atlantic Coast* (1939) and *Still Pool, Peggy's Cove* (1941). Leroy Zwicker was also represented in the 1939, 1942 and 1943 exhibition, with works such as *East Coast Canadian Port* (1943).

¹²³

Interestingly, Zwicker's piece *East Coast Port* is the only work of an obvious Maritime nature.

2.2. MAA Exhibition Commentaries

In order to facilitate the development of the Association's educational work, Walter Abell wanted each exhibition circulated by the MAA be accompanied by "educational material."¹²⁴ He identified these as "namely exhibition catalogues [and] commentaries" which were intended to promote the Association's efforts of expanding the audience for art in the Maritime region.¹²⁵ As he had written to McCurry with respect to this endeavor: "no exhibition can be more successful than the significance of the experience which its visitors derive from it. And in this connection, I believe there is a tremendous field for development."¹²⁶ This "development" refers to the exhibition literature that was produced by members of the MAA, to accompany the various exhibitions and intended to summarize the significant points of art history, art processes or qualities of design important for greater appreciation of the work in the exhibition.¹²⁷

However, Abell was sure to distance these commentaries from those of the art critic, for example in the 1938 catalogue for *The Royal Canadian Academy Traveling Exhibition* he writes: "True, there is a large group of painters who feel that the Royal Canadian Academy is old-fashioned in technique, circumscribed in its outlook, and not representative of Canadian painting as a whole; but [we aim] not to take the art critic's

¹²⁴ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, November 11, 1936. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, November 19, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹²⁷ Ibid.

position.”¹²⁸ Rather, these commentaries were “intended for the layman and would discuss the exhibition in a way which would help him to understand and enjoy it.”¹²⁹ Implicit in this statement is the notion that art appreciation required a certain language not familiar to the “layman” and, therefore, the finer points of the work had to be laid out for them in a way that could be readily understood. The public talks and radio broadcasts organized by the MAA held a similar purpose – to provide a basic understanding of the elements of art and art appreciation to the larger public.

If assisting the average person in understanding and enjoying works of art was one of Walter Abell’s main priorities for these exhibition commentaries, the exhibitions circulated by the MAA can be seen as didactic in nature. For Abell these guides to the intelligent study of pictures were intended to assist the general audience to get the most “out of the exhibition by pointing him to various aspects of the work, which he might be ignorant of or insensitive to.”¹³⁰ The impetus for Abell to assume the responsibility of producing lengthy exhibition commentaries resulted from a dissatisfaction with those provided by the NGC. Abell would go so far as to suggest to McCurry that the National Gallery create the position of an Education Director; a job that Abell would hold in 1944. The function of this position would be to “increase the effectiveness of circulating

¹²⁸ Walter Abell and Annie Beals, *The Royal Canadian Academy Traveling Exhibition 1938*, Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentary, No. 1, 1938-39, 1. PAPEI Acc no 3859, File 178. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹²⁹ Letter, Walter Abell, Sackville, NB, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, ON, May 23, 1936. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹³⁰ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to Kathleen Fenwick, Ottawa, ON, October 12, 1936. NGC Library and Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

exhibitions by assisting the public in the various communities where they are shown to understand and enjoy them.”¹³¹

The accompanying source material provided by the NGC was often no more than a list of the names of the artists and works included. Abell informed McCurry that the simplicity of their catalogues was not to the liking of the MAA nor was it of “primary interest to the general public.”¹³² From Abell’s perspective the “two things most appreciated in a catalogue are reproductions and some sort of comment which is of assistance in understanding and appreciating the works shown.”¹³³ As an important element of MAA exhibition programming, the commentaries provide an insight into how the members of this regional association conceived of their role as disseminators of art to the greater public. They also indicate what the so-called “layman” was directed to take from the works of art – shaping how art was understood.

The commentary written by Abell for the 1935-36 NGC exhibition *Modern French Painting in Color Reproductions*, demonstrates the kinds of international works brought to the Maritime Provinces. The thirty works in this exhibition were especially interesting “in that they form a link between attitudes of the present day and that of the past attitudes of mind or cultures.”¹³⁴ Featured in this exhibition was: Édouard Manet, Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, Paul Cezanne, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Henri

¹³¹ Letter, Abell to McCurry, November 19, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.I. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹³² Letter, Abell to McCurry, September 23, 1935.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ “First of a Series to be Held Here Under the Auspices of Art Society,” *Charlottetown Guardian*, October 26, 1935, 3.

Matisse and Pablo Picasso. To Abell, the benefits of this particular exhibition were twofold:

It contains many pictures which are unquestionably great works of art and which offer, for those who can receive them, the deep experiences of beauty that all great art gives. And it also enables us to follow the main development of art from the middle of the 19th century up to the earlier decades of the 20th century, thus affording a broad view of the artistic foundation of the modern period.¹³⁵

Abell went on to explain that “modern” was used in the broad sense of the term and that the works contained in this exhibition were not “productions of the present day,” citing the fact that no examples of recent movements such as cubism or surrealism, or works by younger artists, were included.¹³⁶ Acknowledging that some viewers might find these works “distressingly” modernistic, Abell reminded observers:

All great art involves new ways of seeing and feeling ... All great art is a challenge to look at the world through eyes that are not our own, an opportunity to enrich our experience by learning to receive the experience of others. Art which repeats an easy and familiar beauty, is insignificant as compared with that which opens our eyes to a beauty which we had not previously known, however difficult to grasp that beauty may be for us at first.¹³⁷

For Abell the “challenge to look at the world” through new eyes was well worth the effort with respect to the modern art movement, as such work was representative of “the artistic expression of our own civilization.”¹³⁸ Providing detailed explorations, Abell directed

¹³⁵ Walter Abell, *Modern French Painting in Colour Reproduction*, Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentaries: 1935-36, No. 3., 3. AUASC, 1900:28, Walter Abell Fonds, MAA Commentaries, 1935/36, 1938/39. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.) This exhibition commentary was lengthy at ten pages.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 2.
Reproductions of works by Picasso, *The Gourmet* (1901) and *The Absinth Drinker* (1901), are not representative of his cubist approach.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

viewers to compare and contrast the works exhibited: “Study the *House on the Hill* [by Cezanne] and compare it with Renoir’s *Chestnut Tree in Bloom*. Instead of the fluid airiness and diffusion of the Renoir landscape, we are met by a stark insistence upon rugged structure and solid mass.”¹³⁹

Abell also wrote the commentary for the 1936-37 NGC exhibition *Canadian Group of Painters*, which coincided with his lecture “New Directions in Canadian Paintings.” According to Abell this exhibition offered the viewer a look at a “chapter in the history of Canadian art, enabling them to increase their acquaintance with the type of work being done by some of our prominent artists at the present time.”¹⁴⁰ Beginning with a brief survey of the Group of Seven, Abell outlined the history of the movement citing works included in the exhibition as examples. He then expanded his discussion to address the place of the younger generation of Canadian artists that effectively formed the membership of the Canadian Group including: Arthur Lismer, A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974), Carl Schaefer, Emily Carr, Lawren Harris (1885-1970), Bertram Brooker, Franklin Carmichael (1890-1945), A.J. Casson (1898-1992), Alexander Bercovitch and Pegi Nicol. Although no Maritime artists were represented, at a lecture delivered at the opening of the Saint John show Abell told audiences that “no discussion of Canadian art would be complete without reference to [Jack] Humphrey.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Ibid., 6.

¹⁴⁰ Walter Abell, *Canadian Group of Painters*, Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentaries: 1936-37. No.4., 1. AUASC, 1900:028 Walter Abell Fonds, MAA Commentaries 1935/36, 1938/39. This exhibition commentary was eight pages in length. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁴¹ “Creative, Modern Art of Canadians Said ‘Worth While.’ Acadia Professor Describes Painting at Gathering in M.R.A. Display Hall,” *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, February 12, 1937, 3.

Identifying these artists as “significant” Abell explained that their interests lay in the more experimental possibilities in art: “Far from wanting his work to be conventional (similar to what has long been done and is already reduced to a formula) [the artist] rather seeks to explore new possibilities in art.”¹⁴² According to Abell these experiments were to be “gathered from the music of colour and light and line which is the artist’s business to compose to us,” which he defined as *art values*.¹⁴³ If, he continued, the viewer was willing to “study the work in a serious effort to understand it. [There was] a lesson in the appreciation of art, a chance to develop sensitivity to new effects – new sources of visual enjoyment.”¹⁴⁴ Abell’s designation of the formal qualities of the work of art as *art values* speaks to then current trends in notions of aesthetics and art appreciation.

In the decade prior to the formation of the MAA, the development of the appreciation of beauty became the main effort in the field of art education, and was characterized as the “emotional or aesthetic responses to creations in nature or in art materials.”¹⁴⁵ This was achieved by developing observation and visual judgment, which, as another important aspect to art education, aided in the development of appreciation.¹⁴⁶ The practice of guiding audiences by pointing to elements of the work they might otherwise be “ignorant of or insensitive to” was grounded in the “Fundamentals of art”; which refers to the “basic elements and principles, which remain constant and are

¹⁴² Abell, *Canadian Group of Painters*, 2.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ J.B. Smith, “Trends of Thought in Art Education,” *The School Review* 41.4 (April 1933): 268.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 270.

applicable to all the arts.”¹⁴⁷ In addition to providing basic facts about the artists and works of art, it was the emphasis on directed looking, or “intelligent seeing,” that best characterizes the MAA exhibition commentaries and their attempt to develop a “language common to all the arts.”¹⁴⁸

Other members of the Association also wrote exhibition commentaries. For example, Elizabeth McLeod, then principal of the art school at Mount Allison University, provided the six-page text for *Contemporary Prints from Czechoslovakia* (1935-36), which included forty-eight works. In it, she provided a detailed explanation of the various printmaking techniques, such as etching and soft ground etching, dry-point, aquatint, wood cuts and lithographs. Interestingly, these same explanations were also used for the seven-page *Modern Colour Print* (1936-37) commentary written by Frieda Creelman (1900-1967) and Eleanor Lowe (1901-2008), both members of the Art Society of Prince Edward Island. That same year, Violet Gillett wrote the commentary for the exhibition *Creative Art by Children*. The works for this exhibition were drawn from Arthur Lismer’s child art classes at the Art Gallery of Toronto. Rather than exploring each work of art individually, Gillett wrote generally about children’s art, as well as current approaches to art education for children: “art is essential in the development of the individual and therefore should have an important place in the educational program.”¹⁴⁹ Gillett explained that a child’s creative and expressive qualities are explored “freely and unconsciously

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 271.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 274.

¹⁴⁹ Violet Gillett, *Creative Art By Children*, Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentaries 1936-37: No.2., 2. UNBHIL, 3.12. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.) This exhibition commentary is five pages in length.

through drawings, [and] constructive activities.”¹⁵⁰ She continued by explaining that because children do not think as “astutely” as adults, nor is their vision as “complex,” the “portrayal of their experience is generally more direct and spontaneous.” As such, the aim of modern art education for children was to develop “individual ideas, creative aptitude and an appreciation of the “beautiful nature of art.”¹⁵¹ It is likely that Gillett’s remarks related directly to her lecture “A Plea for the Furtherance of Art Education,” which she delivered that same year, as her written commentary clearly outlines the aims and benefits of modern art education for children.

In 1937-38 Saint John artist Lillian Clarke (1906-u.n.) wrote the commentary for *The Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour Annual Exhibition*. In her introduction, Clarke claimed that water-colour painting was Great Britain’s most important “contributions to the art of the world [and] from 1860 to 1890 it was the most important art of Canada.”¹⁵² Identifying water colour as one of the oldest mediums, she claimed it was also the most “difficult medium to master.”¹⁵³ However, over the years it had emerged from “stiff, pale drawings to freely-painted, brilliantly-coloured, highly emotional compositions in form and pattern in any style that expresses the artist’s purpose and outlook.”¹⁵⁴ A review of the show in the *Halifax Daily Star* highlighted the “Canadian scene [as] the favorite subject of these paintings and in them it is faithfully

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 1.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵² Lillian Clark, *Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour Annual Exhibition, 1937*, Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentaries: 1937-38., 2. Dalhousie University Archives, MS-2-280 E 38, Donald MacKay Collection. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.) This exhibition commentary was five pages in length.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 1.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 2.

and arrestingly depicted, and the characteristic design of the Canadian landscapes coupled with this vivid coloring gives a vigorous beauty to these water colours.”¹⁵⁵ In order to provide the viewer with a basis from which to judge the works, Clarke outlined the method, technical approach, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the medium. She then grouped the works into those which emphasized design and those which emphasized pattern. Avery Shaw was represented in this exhibition with *Dead Pine* (c.1937), which fell among the more “imaginative” of the works presented.¹⁵⁶

The first year alone of active programming by the MAA represents the most extensive year of public art activities ever before organized in the Maritime region. Despite this achievement between 1935 and 1945 MAA programming failed to expand, according to Walter Abell: “the feeling that the general programming of the Association indeed has been merely sinking into decline.”¹⁵⁷ Abell’s desire to expand the activities of the Association on a national scale, through *Maritime Art* as well as his participation in the Kingston Conference and the Federation of Canadian Artists in 1941, is countered by Meagher’s “attempts to maintain the status quo.”¹⁵⁸ For example, under John Meagher, who succeeded Abell as President in 1937 and resigned in 1942, the program of traveling exhibitions was “continued with comparatively little modification.”¹⁵⁹ As Abell stated in 1943: “A certain tension ... gradually developed between those who favored keeping the

¹⁵⁵ “Brilliant Art Exhibition will be Concluded Today,” *Halifax Daily Star*, June 7, 1938, 3.

¹⁵⁶ Clark, *Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour Annual Exhibition, 1937*, 3-4.

¹⁵⁷ Walter Abell, “A Statement Concerning The Maritime Art Association,” Wolfville, NS, January 7, 1943. MAUA, 7654/8. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁵⁸ Paikowsky, “From Away,” 53.

¹⁵⁹ Maritime Art Association. Reports of the President 1942-43, 2. NBMLA, JC Papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

Association in its accustomed path without very specific thought to the future, and those who felt that growth, change, and adaptation were essential to meet changing circumstances.”¹⁶⁰ This tension was felt most prominently between Abell and Meagher. Meagher viewed the years surrounding the Second World War as limiting his ability to arrange for exhibitions from the NGC because of increased tariffs and restrictions on shipping: “[due to] our inability ... to move Traveling Exhibitions from points to point with any degree of promptness.... It has been considered necessary to restrict the number of traveling exhibitions, particularly those of the larger types.”¹⁶¹ For Abell, however, the war activities brought new opportunities for the region: “The fact remains that in many places the war has stimulated new and unprecedented artistic developments. It does not in any sense offer a legitimate excuse for relaxing artistic effort.... Our main problem, it seems to me, [is] securing dynamic leadership.”¹⁶² Implicit in this statement is Abell’s criticism of Meagher and his failure to develop the MAA beyond the ambitions of the founding constitution.¹⁶³

2.3. *Exhibition Spaces*

The spaces used by the individual groups to display the exhibitions organized and circulated by the MAA between 1935 and 1945 were varied. In the Maritime region there

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ John Meagher, To the Members of the Maritime Art Association – letter of resignation. November 23, 1942. NGC Archives, 7.4 C. Carnegie Corporation – NB – MAA. Outside activities/organizations. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁶² Walter Abell, “A Statement Concerning the Maritime Art Association,” 2.

¹⁶³ For Abell, this unprecedented stimulus to the fostering of artistic development was seen in the Works Progress Administration in the United States. Paikowsky, “From Away,” 53.

were only three art institutions with a permanent exhibition space: the Owens Museum of Fine Art, Sackville, the Robert Harris Memorial Art Gallery, Charlottetown and the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John. The Halifax Museum of Fine Art was an established body within the Halifax art community since 1908, but without a permanent space, it functioned more as an art society than a museum or gallery. And, although Charlottetown was fortunate in having an art gallery, Arthur Lismer described the town as a “neglected community culturally and aesthetically,” while its gallery was “bad and useless.”¹⁶⁴

With a lack of cultural infrastructure in the region, the MAA member-groups managed with whatever space was available to them. In Halifax, exhibitions were shown in the Trafalgar Room of the Lord Nelson Hotel, which was also a space employed by the Nova Scotia Society of Artists for its shows. However, in 1943-44 and 1944-45, MAA exhibitions were installed in the Science Building on the campus of Dalhousie University. In Wolfville, the exhibitions were installed in the art room or in the main hall of Acadia University. In Moncton, NB, the City Hall was employed as a venue and in Newcastle, NB, the public school Harkins Academy was used to exhibit works. The sporting goods or rug room of the Manchester Robertson Allison Limited Department Store, King Street, in Saint John, often housed these traveling exhibitions. The use of non-traditional exhibition spaces was a creative solution to the reality of the region and as a means to promote and foster a “knowledge and appreciation” of the arts among larger audiences. With limited support and resources within the Maritime region it is interesting to consider that despite the presence of the New Brunswick Museum in Saint John,

¹⁶⁴ Arthur Lismer, Report of a Tour of the Maritime Provinces – Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. February-March, 1940, 4. Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA), P6/D File D12, Arthur Lismer Fonds. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

neither those exhibitions borrowed from the NGC or those organized by the MAA were ever displayed in this space. One can speculate that this was due to the fact that Dr. William MacIntosh was director of the NBM had declined participation in the MAA in 1934, stating that the museum planned to undertake its own program of loan exhibitions: “I am now much occupied in considering the extension educational work, ... One feature of the program is the sending of loan exhibitions to various parts of the province.”¹⁶⁵ However, it is not clear whether or not the NBM’s loan exhibition program every came to fruition. There was also some suggestion that in fact the director and curator Dr. William MacIntosh was “not interested in, and almost inimical to, the advancement of art in the Provinces.”¹⁶⁶ In a history of the NBM, written by then curator W. Austin Squires in 1945, the claim is put forth that, with no space for exhibitions, the Museum was unable to participate in the activities of the MAA “in their efforts to promote interest in the local movement.”¹⁶⁷

This lack of cultural authority caused some difficulty for art groups in the Maritime region. As Walter Abell explained: “Exhibitions of what may be called the “museum type” are suitable only to a relatively few large centers which can dispose of special facilities. Smaller centers usually experience difficulties when attempting to handle exhibitions of this type.”¹⁶⁸ The issue of alternative spaces was further

¹⁶⁵ Letter, Dr. William MacIntosh to Walter Abell, November 14, 1934. AUASC, 1900:028 Walter Abell Fonds, MAA Correspondence 1934-36. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁶⁶ McInnes. Notes on Art in Canada.

¹⁶⁷ W. Austin Squires, *The History and Development of the New Brunswick Museum* (Saint John, N.B: New Brunswick Museum, 1945), 36.

¹⁶⁸ Walter Abell, Reports of the President and Treasurer for the Year 1942-1943, 6. NBMLA, JC Papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

confounded by the fact that there was no permanent staff responsible for the space, as Abell reminded McCurry, all MAA work was carried out on a voluntary basis: “As you know, there is no such art museum in the Maritime Provinces. The groups which carry out our activities are schools, colleges and clubs.... These clubs have no regular galleries of their own in which to show exhibitions, but have to rent space somewhere, so that an exhibition cannot simply be hung and left on view indefinitely.... All the work of making arrangement for exhibitions, hanging, and supervising them, is done by voluntary service.”¹⁶⁹ Alternative exhibition spaces, like a department store or hotel, for example, also concerned both Walter Abell and the NGC in terms of the quality of the spaces used and more importantly, the works’ protection. The scarcity of designated and suitable exhibitions spaces also proved difficult for some groups to participate in the activities of the MAA. At the time of its formation, Eileen Hallisey of the Normal School College in Truro, NS, wrote to Abell: “Truro seems to be unprepared, at the present time, to enter the proposed Maritime Art Association. [Due to] the important fact that there is not here a place available, or suitable for showing pictures.”¹⁷⁰ This was undoubtedly the case for other potential member-groups throughout the Maritime region.

In evaluating the NGC and MAA exhibitions, the character of the space in relation to the interaction of the show by general audiences should be considered, however there is little to no visual documentation of any exhibition installation. Without a visual reference for the spatial distribution of the artwork, it is a challenge to determine

¹⁶⁹ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, NS, June 25, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁷⁰ Letter, Eileen Hallisey to Walter Abell, November 24, 1934. AUASC, 1900:028, Walter Abell Fonds – MAA Correspondence 1934-36. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

how the exhibit was framed intellectually and how the viewer was directed to interact with the art in the space. The only documentation currently known that provides some insight into the layout of an MAA exhibition is two hand-written hanging guides in the exhibition brochure for the 1935-36 and 1937-38 MAA annual *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* (Fig. 10).

The spaces used for exhibition by MAA member-groups did not carry the same level of prestige as that of an architecturally defined museum space. Thus, instead of drawing audiences into the space, as a museum would, the public encountered these exhibitions as part of their ordinary routine. For example, the Manchester Robertson Allison Limited Department Store was a distinct commercial space but it is not known if the retail items in the showroom were removed from the space of the exhibition. Therefore, it is possible that because of these non-traditional spaces those people who did not normally engage in art viewing would have been exposed to the content of these exhibitions.

Displaying art exhibitions in spaces such as a department store was not unique to the Maritime region. Removing the works of art from their “confinement in rarefied spaces of the museum” and placing them in a public space inevitably expanded, while simultaneously redefining, the traditional conception of an art going public.¹⁷¹ The use of the department store as an exhibition space was a common practice within larger centers, such as Toronto and Montreal. In 1946 the auditorium of Morgan’s Department Store (now The Bay), on Ste-Catherine Street in Montreal played host to an exhibition of work

¹⁷¹ Isadora Anderson Helfgott, “Art and the Struggle for the American Soul: The Pursuit of a Popular Audience for Art in America from the Depression to World War II,” (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 2006), 6.

by Paul-Emile Borduas (1905-1960), *Borduas expose quelques peintures*. Both the Toronto and Montreal Eaton's is another prominent example of art exhibitions being shown in a commercial space. For example, the 1927 *L'exposition des artistes de la province de Québec*, which included such artists as Georges Delfosse (1869-1939), Berthe Des Clayes (1877-1968), Rita Mount (1888-1967), Mabel May (1877-1971) and Edwin Holgate (1892-1977), was shown in the Montreal Eaton's store.¹⁷² However, the function of these commercial spaces in the context of MAA traveling exhibitions is inherently different. In the larger centers, where there was access to professional museum spaces of various sizes and prestige, the use of an alternative space was a conscious decision, rather than determined by necessity; thus positioning the exhibition within a hierarchy of the art world.

2.4. *The Role of the Traveling Exhibition*

In the years prior to the founding of the MAA, the traveling exhibition funded by philanthropic foundations gained considerable prominence in Canada and the United States. Viewed as a significant mode of distribution, the traveling exhibition was valued for its ability to foster a broader audience for the fine arts. In the 1933 Carnegie Corporation publication *The Arts in American Life*, its President Frederick P. Keppel identifies the nature of the art exhibition as having multiple but interdependent forms. The most relevant to this study is Keppel's definition of the type of exhibition made possible by outside financial aid, which filled the dual purpose of educating the public

¹⁷² "La Galerie Eaton: L'exposition des artistes de la province de Québec," *La Patrie (Montreal)* October 21, 1927, 14.

and providing a venue for the selling of works by artists.¹⁷³ Keppel believed that a greater exposure to art for the general public would arouse interest and that “interest ought to be reflected sooner or later in [the] purchase of works of art and in a demand for better aesthetic quality more in keeping with aesthetic standards of specialists in the arts.”¹⁷⁴ The Carnegie Corporation was “specifically chartered for the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding” and provided assistance to both the American Federation of Arts (AFA) and the College Art Association (CAA).¹⁷⁵ Keppel identified the “growing importance” of the traveling exhibition for these organizations and which “enable people in the smaller cities and towns to see pictures and other works of art which were formerly accessible [to them] only in larger centers.”¹⁷⁶

Founded in 1909 as a non-profit educational institution, the America Federation of Arts was incorporated in New York in 1916. The AFA stated its general purpose was to “foster the production and cultivate the appreciation of art” achieved through a number of initiatives, chief among them: the organization and circulation of art exhibitions in America and abroad.¹⁷⁷ Acknowledging that it was not the “great museums” in large centers that needed these exhibitions, the Federation designated as its main audience “the small chapters [as well as] many groups of people interested in art

¹⁷³ Frederic P. Keppel and R.L. Duffus, *The Art In American Life* (New York & London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc, 1933), 80.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Keppel, “Philanthropic Foundations,” 581.

¹⁷⁶ Keppel and Duffus, *The Art In American Life*, 81.

¹⁷⁷ Dorothy B. Baker, ed., “The American Federation of Arts: Purposes, Activities, Services” *American Art Directory: Volume 42* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1964), xv.

who, without any formal organization to constitute themselves a chapter, wish to have exhibitions.”¹⁷⁸ The success of the traveling exhibition, the Federations stated:

proves that art knows no boundaries or limitations; a group which is shown one month in a great museum, against a background of rare and beautiful things, may be shown the next month at a state fair, in company of prize cattle and crops. It visits colleges, women’s clubs, public libraries, school and other institutions too numerous to mention, and is at home in all of them.¹⁷⁹

In its claim that art “knows no boundaries,” the Federation favors the exhibition removed from the context of traditional modes of art viewing.

Rather than simply organizing an exhibition of works that could be readily appreciated by an “art-savy” audience, AFA exhibitions were intended to “carry a lesson in art appreciation ... carefully ‘planned,’ and then ‘selected,’ to carry the motivating idea.”¹⁸⁰ These ideals were repeated in MAA programming, as Abell was concerned in promoting exhibitions organized and circulated by the Association as lessons in art appreciation, which were also elaborated upon in the exhibition commentaries. In addition, by 1936-37, MAA member-groups were provided with a list of art books should any group wish to “carry out study programs in preparation for exhibitions circulated.”¹⁸¹ Writing to Kathleen Fenwick of the Print Department of the NGC in 1936, Abell asked: “could you suggest a good volume on water colour painting, a general survey of the art with typical examples and something about the quality of the

¹⁷⁸ Robert W. de Forest, “To Make Are Free For Democracy: The Peace program of the American Federation of Arts,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 14.5 (May 1919): 103.

¹⁷⁹ Helfgott, “Art and the Struggle for the American Soul,” 81.

¹⁸⁰ American Federation of Arts, “1933-1934 Traveling Exhibitions Booklet,” quoted in *ibid.*, 134-35.

¹⁸¹ Maritime Art Association, “Some Books Dealing with Subjects Connected with 1936-37 Exhibitions,” 1. UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

medium. I want to give one or two titles on the appreciation of modern art in general, which might be read in connection with the Canadian Group show.”¹⁸²

Founded in 1911 the College Art Association was also integral to the development and success of the traveling exhibition in North America. For the CAA the role of the traveling exhibition was twofold: “helping [lesser known] artists and furthering art appreciation.”¹⁸³ The exposure gained by artists through those exhibitions organized by the MAA was hoped to be reflected in a new form of art patronage, as Walter Abell explained:

It is possible to obtain fine works of modern Canadian art at modest prices and they would be found not only joys to possess, but sound financial investments. [The] modern artist needs both financial support to make a living and a feeling of appreciation of his work or else he will lose his incentive [and] without creative effort the art of a country is dead.¹⁸⁴

Like the AFA, which was considered the “mouthpiece for the expression of public opinion” of art in America, the traveling exhibitions of the CAA were “influential in defining prevailing norms.”¹⁸⁵ The ideals of both organizations were replicated in MAA cultural and educational programming.

Exhibitions backed by Carnegie fulfilled two aspirations of the corporation. Firstly, by supporting traveling exhibitions of American artists circulated throughout the United States and Canada, the corporation was able to cultivate an audience for

¹⁸² Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to Kathleen Fenwick, Ottawa, ON, December 2, 1936. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁸³ College Art Association pamphlet, c. 1933, quoted in Helfgott, “Art and the Struggle for the American Soul,” 137.

¹⁸⁴ “Creative, Modern Art of Canadians Said ‘Worth While.’ Acadia Professor Describes Painting at Gathering in M.R.A. Display Hall,” *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, February 12, 1937, 3.

¹⁸⁵ “The American Federation of Arts,” *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 9.4 (April 1, 1915): 54; Helfgott, “Art and the Struggle for the American Soul,” 138.

American art production. This was evident in the exhibition *Contemporary Painting by Artists of the United States* (1934), circulated throughout Canada by the NGC.¹⁸⁶

Secondly, by arranging for exhibitions of art produced outside the United States, such as in Canada, the corporation assisted in a greater exposure for American audiences to international art practices. An example of this second goal was seen in the show *An Exhibition of Painting by Contemporary Canadian Artists* (1930), organized and circulated throughout the United States by the AFA and funded by the Carnegie Corporation.¹⁸⁷

In the United States of America, the traveling exhibition was also viewed as a vehicle for social change and an opportunity for exerting social influence through art. As has been mentioned, prior to the founding of the MAA, traveling exhibitions organized by both the AFA and the CAA were sent to the Maritime region. Moreover, with Abell's close ties to the Carnegie Corporation, one can speculate the extent to which the ideologies of these organizations would have carried through to the MAA. Certainly, the role of the traveling exhibition as an active mode of distribution for a disparate group of people was the most significant to the members of the Association. Like the exhibitions of the AFA and the CAA, the traveling exhibition program of the MAA illustrates a

¹⁸⁶ *Contemporary Painting by Artists of the United States* was organized by the Corporation to provide a comprehensive look at contemporary American art and included a total ninety-nine artists who were "representative of the most interesting works being accomplished in the United States." Eric Brown, "Forward," *Exhibition of Contemporary Painting by Artists of the United States* (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1934-35), 1.

¹⁸⁷ This exhibition was intended to afford the "opportunity for better acquaintance with the excellent work which our neighbors across the Canadian border are doing, not only to uphold but to create new traditions in the ever fertile field of art." American Federation of Art, "Acknowledgment" *An Exhibition of Painting by Contemporary Canadian Artists* (American Federation of Arts, 1930), 6.

democratic approach to the distribution of art, while at the same time one that was mediated by established art institutions, like the NGC. As Abell explained:

As we all know too well, the vast majority of our population is quite unprepared to participate in any art exhibition of a significant character. It is also evident that many people desire to increase their understanding of art if given means to do so, and exhibitions would seem to be the most vital point at which to assist them, since it is chiefly at exhibitions that the larger number of people have a chance to see original works of art at first hand.¹⁸⁸

In attempting to foster a basic knowledge of fine art and contemporary art production, these traveling exhibitions worked to establish a familiarity and frame of reference for art appreciation in new audiences across Canada and the United States. Certainly, this type of exhibition practice played a significant role in MAA programming, in both its aesthetic and educational aims.

¹⁸⁸ Letter, Abell to McCurry, November 19, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

CHAPTER THREE

Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces

While the majority of exhibitions circulated by the Maritime Art Association were borrowed from the National Gallery of Canada, the Association also endeavored to organize their own series of traveling shows. Between 1935 and 1945 the MAA organized one to two exhibitions a year, as a supplement to those borrowed from the NGC. Providing a greater platform for Maritime art, this exhibition programming further illustrates the active agency of the MAA. Central to this programming was the Association's annual members exhibition *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, open to any artist residing in the Maritime region. Adjudicated by a panel of judges from outside of the region, these exhibitions acted as a way to centralize and provide a comprehensive view of Maritime art production. While the MAA organized and circulated its annual members show beginning in 1935, the 1938-39 programming year marks the first time an additional traveling show was organized by the Association. In this chapter I explore the traveling exhibitions organized by the Association, designed to complement those borrowed from the NGC between 1935 and 1945. Of particular importance to this discussion is the development of the MAA Annual from 1935 onward, which provided a greater platform for Maritime art. The large number of works in the Annual exhibitions highlights the dominant trends in Maritime art; those works which can be identified as regional in nature, and those which demonstrate notions of 20th century modernism.

3.1. *Traveling Exhibitions Organized by the MAA*

Through the organization of their own traveling exhibitions, the MAA actively participated in the advancement of their exhibition programming. As stated in the 1934 proposal for the establishment of the Maritime Art Association: “increased co-operation would enable us to organize *significant* exhibitions of our own.”¹⁸⁹ Reflecting the regional nature of this Association, several of the traveling exhibitions organized by the MAA showcased the work of Maritime artists. These exhibitions included solo as well as group shows of both practicing artists and students in the region. The 1938-39 programming year was the first time the MAA organized a traveling exhibition, in addition to the member’s annual. However, the potential of supplementary exhibitions was first explored as early as 1936.

Following some discussion at the first annual meeting, Walter Abell wrote to H.O. McCurry seeking assistance for an exhibition that would explore design as the underlying principal in art. As a means to illustrate the various aspects of design, Abell intended for this exhibition to include: a collection of decorative objects that clearly illustrated the beauty of pattern, design and use of material; a series of large photographs of various industrial products and examples of architecture; and finally, a number of prints, paintings and real examples of sculpture. Abell also informed McCurry that Alice Webster, art collector and founder of the Fine Arts Department at the New Brunswick Museum, had offered to lend the Association her collection of textiles and Japanese prints for use in the design exhibition. She was described by Arthur Lismer as “godmother to

¹⁸⁹ Association circular, Proposal for the Establishment of a Maritime Art Association. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

the arts in New Brunswick” for the “distinctive and valuable role” she played in fostering the arts within the province.¹⁹⁰ According to Abell, the project would “interest sections of the public not ordinarily reached by picture exhibitions, and that it would have a valuable educational influence in stimulating an interest in art qualities.”¹⁹¹ His emphasis on design, illustrated through craft objects and the fine arts, is a further indication of Abell’s educational philosophies which often emphasized the “aesthetic possibilities’ of materials in the everyday environment.”¹⁹² This notion, as Paikowsky has pointed out, again reflects the influence of John Dewey and his belief that “art can reach into the lives of the masses of the people only as it enters into the building of their homes; their furnishings and utensils; their walls, hangings, floor coverings, tables and chairs; the dishes from which they eat and those with which they cook. Every article of daily use has form and color and wherever form and color exists there is the opportunity for art.”¹⁹³ Although this proposed exhibition never came to fruition, its aim and conception closely align with the intentions of Abell’s lecture *A Key to Art*, as discussed in chapter two. While this exhibition was concerned with looking at design generally, most of the shows organized by the MAA reflected the regional nature of the Association.

¹⁹⁰ Lismer, Report of a Tour of the Maritime Provinces – Saint John, New Brunswick, 3. Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA), P6/D File D12, Arthur Lismer Fonds. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁹¹ Letter, Walter Abell, Sackville, NB, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, May 23, 1936. NGC 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁹² Sandra Paikowsky, “Maritime Art Magazine and Support for the Crafts,” *Cahiers métiers d’art. Craft Journal* 1.2 (Winter 2008): 88.

¹⁹³ John Dewey, “The Educational Function of a Museum of Decorative Arts” (1937) in *John Dewey: The Later Works, 1925-53*, vol. 11 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 520, quoted in *ibid.*, 88.

The 1941-42 show of works by the Nova Scotian photographer Wallace MacAskill clearly reflects this central concern, as MacAskill is known for his romantic images of Nova Scotia's South Shore and those that illustrate the seafaring life of local fisherman and sailors. Indeed, John Meagher identified this exhibition for its distinct regional character. This exhibition comprised over 100 works and according to Meagher: "this showing is in keeping with the title and character of our Association as the collection is entirely Marine."¹⁹⁴ The Association also organized a solo exhibition of the work of Nova Scotian painter Mabel Killam Day (1884-1963), in 1945-46. While Day was privileged in having two solo exhibitions prior to this, solo shows were a relatively uncommon opportunity for women artists in the early to mid 20th century; illustrating the progressive nature of the MAA.¹⁹⁵ Exhibiting a small selection of Day's paintings, this exhibition was again identified as representative of a distinctly Maritime art. As expressed by then president Violet Gillett in a letter to Day, her paintings "catch particularly well the mood of our Maritime landscape and give it colour and design with real fidelity and feeling."¹⁹⁶

In addition to these solo exhibitions of regional artists, the MAA also organized a number of group shows. In 1939-40, the MAA circulated the exhibition *Nova Scotia Photographic Salon*, which had previously been shown at the Annual Provincial Fair. This exhibition was one of three organized and circulated that year, and it was also the

¹⁹⁴ John Meagher, Maritime Art Association circular No. 4. "MacAskill MARINE Collection. November 1942. NGC 5.11-M F.3. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

¹⁹⁵ It is interesting to note that this exhibition was organized by Gillett, the first woman president of the MAA, and could also be a reason why a woman was given a solo show.

¹⁹⁶ Letter, Violet Gillett, Saint John, NB, to Mabel Day, Yarmouth, NS, July 30, 1945. PAPEI, Acc no. 3889 File 81, Maritime Art Association Fonds, Admin papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

first occasion that no NGC exhibitions were circulated by the MAA, an effect of the Second World War. While the Association's main focus was on the work of professional artists, they also provided exhibition opportunities for art students in the region. First discussed at the 1943-44 annual meeting, it was suggested that the Association sponsor a traveling exhibition of the best student work being done at the three major art schools in the region – the Nova Scotia College of Art, the Saint John Vocational School and the Art Department at Mount Allison University. Circulated during the 1944-45 year, this exhibition, as expressed by Violet Gillett, was felt to provide “considerable stimulant to our younger artists.”¹⁹⁷ While their mandate was to foster art activities in the region, prior undertakings by the MAA had for the most part focused on exhibiting the work of practicing artists or arranging lectures. In addition to providing these students with the opportunity to exhibit, representing the best these schools had to offer would have ultimately reflected well on the status of the MAA, as a majority of the active members were responsible for art education in the region.

To further the idea of regional solidarity among MAA member-groups, the Association organized an exhibition showcasing the work of thirty-four non-professional Maritime artists in 1940-41. Open to any individual in the Maritime region, there were over 100 submissions, with the final thirty-four works selected by a panel of “our Maritime Artists” – judges were appointed from the Saint John Art Club, Saint John Vocational School and the N.B. Teacher's College Art Groups.¹⁹⁸ In the accompanying

¹⁹⁷ Violet Gillett. Maritime Art Association, Report of the President, 1944-1945, 2. PAPEI, Acc no. 3859 File 11, Maritime Art Association Fonds.

¹⁹⁸ Exhibition brochure, First non-professional Exhibition, 1940-41. Archives not identified. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

catalogue, the Association explained that while it “may be surprising to many ... this is the first non-professional exhibit [while] all previous exhibits, held annually since 1936, have been combined non-professional and professional.”¹⁹⁹ Although the MAA gives no explicit definition of what they consider to be *professional*, distinguishing this as an amateur exhibition implies that those participating in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* were professional. Given this, it is interesting to consider why Mabel Killam Day was included in the non-professional exhibition, as she was by no means an amateur artist – having studied with American scene painter Robert Henri (1869-1929) at the Art Students’ League in New York and exhibited with the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. Moreover, while the Association makes the claim that their Annual was comprised of professional and non-professional artists, Frederick Nicholas was the only artist in the non-professional show that also exhibited in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*.

The Association also organized shows that promoted the work of contemporary Canadian artists from outside the region. For example, in 1941-42 there was a showing of the work of Montreal painter Louis Muhlstock, who had acted as judge for the 1940-41 MAA Annual. That same year, the Association arranged for an exhibition of works from the Canadian Society of Painters-Etchers and Engravers. Although Meagher claimed that this was the first exhibition of graphic arts circulated by the MAA, in fact the Association had already received a number of print exhibitions from the NGC, including *Contemporary Prints from Czechoslovakia* (1935-36) and *One Hundred Contemporary*

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

British Prints (1938-39).²⁰⁰ Additionally, in the summer of 1945 the Association approached the Canadian Society of Painters-Etchers and Engravers (CSPEE) once again to provide an exhibition for circulation within the region. In response to this request Nicholas Hornyansky, Canadian artist and secretary of the Society, wrote to Helen Beals expressing their wish to assist the Association: “We greet your initiative with much pleasure, as, to our feeling, printmaking is gravely neglected in the Maritimes for its remaining somewhat backwards we felt strongly responsible, without having the means to help the situation.”²⁰¹ For the CSPEE, the MAA was a means to change the status of printmaking in the Maritimes. Although the Society was short on traveling exhibitions that year they offered the MAA a demonstration case illustrating the seven main printmaking processes, as well as a collection of 55 prints belonging to Canadian artists Woodruff Kerr Aykroyd, Sylvia Hahn and Hornyansky. This print collection had toured Western and Central Canada two years prior, under the aegis of the NGC.²⁰² The Association’s interest in international art trends was reflected in its *Reproductions of Contemporary American Artists* circulated in 1938-39. This show consisted of forty-eight framed colour reproductions supplied by Mount Allison University; these prints had been acquired from the Carnegie Corporation and were likely part of the art teaching set given to the university in 1933. The MAA also organized and circulated a showing of etchings and lithographs by the *Associated American Artists of New York* in 1943-44.

²⁰⁰ Annual Meeting of the Maritime Art Association, 1942. John Meagher, To the Members of the Maritime Art Association. PAPEI Acc no. 3850 File 8, Maritime Art Association Fonds. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁰¹ Letter, Nicholas Hornyansky, Toronto, Ont, to Helen Beals, Wolfville, NS, August 20, 1945. PAPEI, Acc no. 3839 File 80, Maritime Art Association Fonds, Admin papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁰² Ibid.

In addition to the exhibitions of national and international content, the MAA also sought exhibitions from groups representative of other regions in Canada. In 1939-40 the MAA offered for circulation *British Columbia Water Colours*, from the British Columbia Society of Artists (BCSA). This exhibition is significant because it was brought to the Maritime region through an arrangement made between the MAA and the BCSA to exchange exhibitions. This resulted in the 1939-40 MAA Annual traveling to several Western Canadian Provinces – the Association’s first traveling exhibition to be circulated beyond the Maritime Provinces. According to John Meagher, it “marked the first occasion in which a collection of the work of the Maritime Artists had gone beyond their borders.”²⁰³ It was first suggested at the Fourth Annual Meeting in May of 1939 that the Association make contact with artists from the West to offer an exchange of exhibitions. In an effort, as John Meagher put it, “to acquaint the rest of Canada with the work of our own artists.”²⁰⁴ The MAA annual was shown at the Vancouver Art Gallery, the University of British Columbia, Saskatoon College, Edmonton and Winnipeg; a route that formed part of the Western Canada Art Circuit founded in 1946 and included the art galleries of Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg.²⁰⁵ While this exchange limited the number of showings the MAA Annual received within the Maritimes, it was, according to Meagher, an “unqualified success” and should be

²⁰³ Maritime Art Association, President’s Report, Fifth Annual Meeting May 23-25, 1940, 25. PAPEI, Acc no. 3859 File 7, Maritime Art Association Fonds, Minutes 1939/40. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁰⁴ John Meagher, Maritime Art Association Bulletin, Paintings by Artists of the Maritimes, 1939 – 1940. Dalhousie University Archives, MS-2-280 E 38, Donald MacKay Collection. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁰⁵ University of British Columbia, “Western Canada Art Circuit collection – Fonds Description,” University of British Columbia Archives, http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/u_arch/binkert.html

considered a “matter of pride” for the Association.²⁰⁶ However, the exhibition of British Columbia watercolours was not favorably received by Walter Abell in a letter to Jack Humphrey he wrote: “[it was] almost completely meaningless; much below the standard even of the Association shows by Maritime artists.”²⁰⁷

In the same letter to Humphrey, Abell expressed his frustration: “I am getting fed up with insipid shows, and am beginning to cast around in my mind as to ways and means of putting on something creatively significant.”²⁰⁸ It is possible that this “something creatively significant” was Abell’s organization of *Maritime Art Magazine*, founded in the Fall of 1940. As Abell wrote in his first Editorial for the magazine: “It seems to us of paramount importance ... that creative stimulus should be made the first and primary consideration in projects such as we are now undertaking.”²⁰⁹ However, in 1943 when Abell took the position of Education Director at the NGC, *Maritime Art* moved to Ottawa and became the nationally published *Canadian Art*, fulfilling “its early ambition to become a truly national art periodical.”²¹⁰ While these exhibitions held a significant role within the scope of MAA programming, the principle concern for the executive and members alike, was arranging the members’ Annual.

²⁰⁶ Meagher, Bulletin. Paintings by Artists of the Maritimes. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁰⁷ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to Jack Humphrey, Saint John, NB, Dec 12, 1939. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Walter Abell, “To Be Creative,” *Maritime Art* 1.1 (October 1940): 3.

²¹⁰ Paikowsky, “Maritime Art Magazine and Support for the Crafts,” 87.

3.2. *The MAA's Annual Members Exhibition*

The MAA's main preoccupation was the organization and circulation of the Association's annual exhibition *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*. Intended to stimulate creative effort among the members of the Maritime art community, the MAA Annual acted as a way to centralize and offer, for the first time, a comprehensive view of art production in the Maritime region. As member Gwendolyn Hales (u.n.-1976) of Wolfville wrote, "[prior to the MAA] the only place where one might gain a little knowledge of the painting being done in the Maritime Provinces was at the different Provincial Exhibitions."²¹¹

Between 1935 and 1945 *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* was shown, on average, in nine different locations representing fourteen group showings. A group showing, or one exhibition engagement, often represented multiple MAA member-groups. When tabulating the number of exhibition showings in the year-end total, one exhibition could be counted as four. For example, one ten-day exhibition showing in Halifax was sponsored by four MAA member-groups. While in both Fredericton and Saint John, one exhibition showing represented two MAA member-groups. Each year the MAA Annual often had a higher number of exhibition engagements among MAA member-groups, than those shows borrowed from the NGC. For example, in 1940-41 the *Royal Canadian Academy* exhibition, circulated by the NGC, was hosted by MAA member-groups for a total of eight showings while *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* had fourteen. While the size of NGC exhibitions would be a legitimate explanation for a lower number of engagements, as some groups were ill equipped to deal

²¹¹ Gwendolyn Hales, "Maritime Artists's Picture on View. Two Local Painters Have Work Included in Exhibit Now Being Shown at Acadia," *The Acadian*, December 12, 1935, 10.

with larger shows, the MAA annuals were also large with as many as 47 works.

However, it is no surprise that there was a greater interest among members of the MAA to see the work of Maritime artists, rather than those of the national and international artists characteristic of the exhibitions borrowed from the NGC.

Submission to the MAA Annuals were open to any individual residing in the Maritime region. It was hoped by the MAA executive that the exhibitions would be “representative of some of the best work being produced in the Maritimes.”²¹² According to the call for submissions to the first exhibition of *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* any artist was permitted to send more than one work for consideration by the judges. However, only one work would be chosen to represent each artist in the exhibition, unless, in the opinion of the judges, the quality of the exhibition could be “materially” improved by doing otherwise.²¹³ Initially conceived to include no more than 25 works, the average number of artists presented each year (from 1935 to 1945) ranged between 29 and 32.²¹⁴

The call for submissions was generally circulated early in the programming year, with works due anywhere between the end of September and the end of October. After the final selection had been made, the exhibition was circulated from the Fall through to Spring of the following year. The call clearly indicated the guidelines for works and the parameters of the exhibition itself. For example, the first Annual was: to consist of twenty-five paintings; open to both oils and watercolours; entries should be framed; they

²¹² Association circular. Exhibition Announcement: Painting in the Maritime Provinces, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ For example, the first Annual included 31 artists, each represented by one work. However, in 1940-1, 44 artists were represented and 39 the following year, 1941-2.

should be medium in size, preferably no smaller than 14 x 18” and no larger than 25 x 36”. Each year the medium, size and number of entries were outlined in the call for submissions. In 1936-37, for example, paintings were to be watercolour, pastels or tempera with a minimum size of 8 x 10” un-matted, although no maximum was stated.²¹⁵ While the number of submissions was generally restricted to two works by each artist, in 1936-37 the number of submissions was unrestricted and in 1939-40 artists could submit up to two works “in any one medium” – oils, water colours or graphic arts.²¹⁶ In the first few years of the Annual, the medium rotated between oil and watercolour painting. However, it was decided at the fourth annual meeting that the quality of the exhibition would be improved if it were a mixed show of oil and watercolour. The 1939-40 Annual also marks the first year that graphic arts were included, with recommended dimensions ranging from 11 x 14 to 30 x 40 inches.

Although there was often a restriction placed on the number of works submitted, over the years the number accepted gradually increased. For example, by the second annual exhibition, which comprised a total of forty works, both Jack Humphrey and Avery Shaw had three works in the show, while John Bishop (1908-1972), Miller Brittain, Ted Campbell (1904-1985), Julia Crawford and Violet Gillette each had two. This trend of multiple entries continued over the years. Notably, each year more than half of the exhibiting artists were women. However, while the high number of women exhibitors in the MAA Annuals is commendable, it is not exceptional when compared to

²¹⁵ Maritime Art Association, Invitation to Artists to Submit Work for the Second Annual Traveling Exhibition of Work by Maritime Artists, 1936, UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²¹⁶ Association circular, Fifth Annual Exhibition of the Work of the Maritime Artists, Open to the Artists of the Maritime Provinces, 1939. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.3. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

shows of equal size and character. For example, out of a total of 41 artists included in the 1935 annual exhibition of the Nova Scotia Society of Artists, 34 were women.²¹⁷

Although the works in the MAA Annuals were predominantly paintings, there was the desire to include works in other mediums. For example, at the first annual meeting of the MAA, it was suggested that the next exhibition of Maritime artists should also include craftwork.²¹⁸ Yet, despite the majority vote in favor of craftworks, it was never included in the Annuals. However, it should be noted that Abell was an avid supporter of the crafts and craftspeople.²¹⁹ His support of the “useful arts” is clearly demonstrated in the pages of *Maritime Art* and stated in his first Editorial: “We are interested in the painting of the Maritime Provinces, but we are also interested in their architecture, their creative photography, their pottery and weaving.... All of these things are art. All of them have contributions to make to culture.”²²⁰ Sandra Paikowsky noted in her article “Maritime Art Magazine and Support of the Crafts,” that there were often writings in the magazine dedicated to the training of craftspeople, such as “New Brunswick Renaissance” written by Aida McAnn in 1941, or those that focused on the work of individual artisans, such as the renowned New Brunswick potters Kjeld and

²¹⁷ Mora Dianne O’Neill, “*Nova Scotia Society of Artists: Exhibitions and Members 1922-1972* (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1997).

²¹⁸ Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of the Maritime Art Association, May 21-22 1936, 3. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²¹⁹ For a discussion of Walter Abell and his support of craft in *Maritime Art Magazine*, see: Sandra, Paikowsky, “Maritime Art Magazine and Support for the Crafts,” *Cahier métiers d’art. Craft Journal* 1.2 (Winter 2008): 87-95.

²²⁰ Walter Abell, “To Be Creative,” *Maritime Art* 1.1 (October 1940): 7, quoted in Paikowsky, “Maritime Art Magazine and Support for the Crafts,” 87.

Erica Deichmann in “Treasures from Maritime Soil. The Story of Deichmann Pottery.”²²¹ At the fifth annual meeting the possibility of including wood sculptures by Halifax sculptor John Bradford was addressed and it was decided that Bradford could “send in his work, to be accepted or rejected as the jury saw fit.”²²² The 1942-43 Annual was the only year Bradford’s work was included in the MAA member’s exhibition. At the same meeting it was also suggested that potters Kjeld and Erica Deichmann be approached to submit work for consideration by the chosen jury. In spite of this interest in the crafts the MAA Annuals remained predominantly painting.

3.3. *Judges of the MAA Annual*

Once the art works were gathered in a central location, the final selection for *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* was determined by a panel of judges, who generally lived outside of the region. Writing to Walter Abell in October, 1935 John Meagher suggested an effort be made to have the works for the first exhibition of Maritime paintings, as “something new and different,” judged by H.O. McCurry: “The advantages ... are many [since] the judging would be outside and impartial.” Meagher believed that with McCurry, and therefore the NGC, responsible for the final selection the exhibition would be given the “prestige [and] character of a show emanating from the Gallery, [an] assured success for ‘our great adventure.’”²²³ With Meagher’s suggestion

²²¹ Ibid., 91-93.

²²² Proceedings, Fifth Annual Meeting. Maritime Art Association, Acadia University, May 23-25 1940, 31. PAPEI, Acc no. 3859 File 7, Maritime Art Association Fonds. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²²³ Letter, John Meagher, Halifax, NS, to Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, October 18, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

Abell wrote to McCurry: "While the plan would have advantages, my first impression is to feel that it is a rather cumbersome one."²²⁴ And although McCurry encouraged the "idea of having the Maritime exhibition chosen by some outside authority," he felt it was best to have the work done "by someone not connected with the National Gallery."²²⁵

Arthur Lismer was to judge the first exhibition of *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, but he was unable to travel to the Maritime region due to his schedule at the Art Gallery of Toronto. As a result, the work was done by Walter Abell, Halifax architect Andrew Cobb and Stanley Royle. The only other year, between 1935 and 1945, that residents of the Maritimes were chosen to jury the MAA Annual was for the 1943-44 showing. That year judging was undertaken by Alice Webster, Edith Hudson, Saint John artist and then curator of the Department of Art at the NBM, and Kjeld Deichmann, prominent Canadian potter of Moss Glen, NB.²²⁶

While there were many in the Association who felt that a group of local artists would be adequate judges for the MAA Annual, it was decided that judges from outside of the region provided a "happier solution."²²⁷ The advantages of such an arrangement, in the eyes of the MAA executive, far out-weighed the inconvenience of shipping as many as 100 hundred paintings to Montreal or Toronto for jurying, and then have them shipped back to the Maritimes for circulation. With entries essentially anonymous, the works

²²⁴ Letter, Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, October 18, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²²⁵ Letter, H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, to Walter Abell, Wolfville, NS, October 22, 1935. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²²⁶ Roulston, "Exhibitions," 10.

²²⁷ Maritime Art Association, Annual Meeting, Charlottetown, P.E.I. 1938. NBMLA, JC Papers. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

were meant to be judged entirely on their own merits, although the submissions of better-known artists were undoubtedly recognized. Although the selection process was based on the merit of the work submitted, this sometimes had unfavorable results. For example, in 1940-41, Andrew Cobb informed that year's judge Louis Muhlstock, that in the year prior not one artist from Prince Edward Island was represented in the Annual exhibition. Cobb was concerned that if works by PEI artists were again excluded it might discourage and adversely affect the "Maritime character of our association."²²⁸ A suggestion, wrote Cobb, "made solely in the interest of our future growth."²²⁹

For Walter Abell, the jurors from Montreal or Toronto brought to their judgment: "standards established in the larger art centers and thus might be expected to exert a stimulating influence in the development of Maritime art. At the same time, contacts are established between art activities in the Maritime Provinces and other districts and these contacts cannot but be beneficial to all concerned."²³⁰ For instance, the work of four artists from the Maritime Provinces were reproduced in the 1936 edition of *The Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, edited by Bertram Brooker: Stanley Royle's *Evening Light*, Elizabeth S. Nutt's *Derelicts*, Jack Humphrey's *The White Pitcher* and Avery Shaw's *Flower Design* (Fig. 11).

In addition to encouraging the Association's desire for judges outside of the region, H.O. McCurry often played a role in the recommendation of suitable members of

²²⁸ Letter, Andrew Cobb, Halifax, NS. to Louis Muhlstock, Montreal, QC, October 18, 1940. NGC Archives 5.5 M, National Gallery of Canada Fonds, Maritime Provinces Artists Ex. 1940. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Walter Abell, Report of the President 1936-37, 3-4. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

the central Canadian art community to appraise the work of Maritime artists. However, he himself refused to take on the role of juror, as doing so would make it appear as though the NGC was judging the show. From McCurry's perspective, this would give the MAA Annual more prestige than he felt was perhaps warranted. Judges from outside of the region included: John Alfred (1937-38), Toronto artist and illustrator; Martin Baldwin (1937-38), Toronto architect and then curator at the Art Gallery of Toronto; Albert Cloutier (1938-39, 1939-40), Montreal graphic designer and illustrator; Charles Comfort (1936-37), Toronto painter and charter member of the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour; Peter Haworth (1936-37, 1937-38), Toronto painter and president of the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour; Edwin Holgate (1938-39, 1939-40), RCA, Montreal artist and eighth member of the Group of Seven, later renamed the Canadian Group of Painters; Arthur Lismer (1941-42), Toronto artist and founding member of the Group of Seven; Louis Muhlstock (1940-41), Montreal artist and member of the Canadian Society of Graphic Art; Pegi Nicol (1936-37), based between Toronto, New York and Fredericton, and member of the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour and the Canadian Group of Painters; Will Ogilvie (1938-39), Montreal artist and founding member of the Canadian Group of Painters.²³¹

The response by many of the judges to the quality of the works submitted to the MAA Annuals was one of genuine surprise. As Jack Humphrey wrote in his 1955 article "The Problem of Artists in the Maritimes," there was often a tendency for "central Canada to scorn the Maritimes."²³² With a certain degree of irony he proposed that the

²³¹ Maritime Art Association, <http://maa.concordia.ca>.

²³² Jack Humphrey, "The Problems of the Artist in the Maritimes," *Canadian Art* 12.2 (Winter 1955): 70.

simplest explanation for this was that the Maritimes are “isolated and opportunities are few; therefore, what they produce in the arts is thought to be inferior.”²³³ This was evident in the jury’s report for 1936-37 by Charles Comfort, Peter Haworth and Pegi Nicol: “Judging from the works submitted for this exhibition, water colour painting in the Maritimes is in an encouraging state of health and vigor. The technical maturity displayed, and the high-spirited content of the pictures, was a happy surprise to those of us not fully acquainted with the work of Maritime Painters;” and that many of the artists had “grasped the significance of watercolour as a medium suited to bold and rapid statement, a result which is immediately filled with a new and refreshing vitality, optimistic to the extreme.”²³⁴

While the jury was pleasantly surprised at the quality of the art works, they also cautioned Maritime artists to be wary: “a ‘cult of vigor’ which embodies vigor alone, might easily become only an exultant shout, without any intelligent apprehension of life, or any significant comment on it.”²³⁵ In other words, there was a tendency among these Maritime artists to regard subjects merely as a way to illustrate their handling of medium. In the report by the judges of the 1938-39 Annual, Edwin Holgate, Albert Cloutier and Will Ogilvie, commented that: “In several cases we found a great delicacy and sensitiveness in the outlook, with a perhaps inadequate technical ability. We favored the artist rather than the craftsman in such cases. All three of us were impressed with the high

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Report of the President, Maritime Art Association, 1936-37. “Judges Report,” 4. CU RBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²³⁵ Ibid.

standard of work submitted in both media, which must reflect good technical teaching.”²³⁶ Through their connection to “artists of distinction,” as defined by Walter Abell, the MAA Annuals were believed to carry a greater degree of respect.²³⁷

Edwin Holgate, along with Albert Cloutier, again acted as judge for the 1939-40 annual. As was previously mentioned, the 1939-40 MAA annual was the first and only show to tour the Western Provinces of Canada. This was also the year that John Meagher approached H.O. McCurry about the prospect of showing *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* at the National Gallery of Canada: “I recall a conversation we had in which it seemed possible that this exhibition might stop off at Ottawa on its return journey. Would it be possible to hang it for a brief period in the Gallery as indicative of the Art and character of the Maritimes?”²³⁸ This would be an opportunity that, according to Meagher, would place the Maritime Art Association “on the map.”²³⁹ Writing to Holgate, McCurry expressed his concern regarding the exhibition: “I am doubtful of the quality ... but do not wish to withhold support. Perhaps you could give me a line, confidentially of course, on the Maritime Exhibition, which I understand you recently judged.”²⁴⁰ Holgate, who had been sent one hundred and one pictures and instructed to

²³⁶ Edwin Holgate quoted in John Meagher, “Foreword,” *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, 1938-39. Exhibition Catalogue. Archives not identified. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²³⁷ Walter Abell, Report of the President, 1936-37, 4. CURBMI, Carnegie Grant Files, Box 211A, Maritime Art Association 1934-1943. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²³⁸ Letter, John Meagher, Halifax, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, April 6, 1940. NGC Archives 5.5 M, National Gallery of Canada Fonds, Maritime Provinces Artists Ex. 1940. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²³⁹ Letter, John Meagher, Halifax, NS, to Mrs. T.J. Coughy, Charlottetown, PEI, September 23, 1939. UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughy Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁴⁰ Letter, McCurry, to Holgate, 18 October, 1939. NGC Archives 5.5 M. National Gallery of Canada Fonds, Maritime Provinces Artists Ex. 1940. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

select forty, was less than pleased to be put in such a position: “I hoped when I received Mr. Meagher’s letter that there would not be any strings attached to my job. For job it is ... I have unpacked and re-packed these things for two years now ... simply in the spirit of co-operation. And I don’t want Mr. Meagher roping me into the position of urging you to send the show traveling 3000 miles!”²⁴¹ While characterizing the work of the MAA as “praiseworthy,” Holgate expressed blunt indifference to the work at hand: “I had serious difficulty in filling out the [advised] number – and in the end I was forced to plug the gap with inferior work.”²⁴²

However, Holgate also informed him that: “A number of items were outstanding – and merited a broader public than they will receive in the East.... A carefully selected 25 would – in my opinion – stimulate interest.”²⁴³ In July of 1940 *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* was presented at the National Gallery of Canada. McCurry told Meagher that the exhibition looked “quite well in the Gallery ... notwithstanding a few very weak spots.”²⁴⁴ However, according to McCurry, the experts in Ottawa were rather critical of the exhibition.²⁴⁵ Despite the less than favorable reception, the MAA had

²⁴¹ Letter, Edwin Holgate, Montreal, QC, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, October 19, 1939. NGC Archives 5.5 M, National Gallery of Canada Fonds, Maritime Provinces Artists Ex. 1940. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Letter, H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, to John Meagher, Halifax, NS, September 25, 1940. NGC Archives 5.11-M F.3. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁴⁵ Illustrating the reception of this exhibition among the Ottawa art community is the fact that no critical reviews appeared in the press during the time of its showing.

achieved a first in the Association's history, to have an exhibition hung, according to Meagher, at "the Mecca of Canadian art."²⁴⁶

3.4. *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*

The MAA's annual exhibition *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* provided a cross section of Maritime art production by exhibiting anywhere between 30 and 40 works in a single show. According to John Meagher: "It is in keeping with the general character of our Association that this Exhibition [represents] a splendid cross section of Maritime art [and is] our most important showing of the year."²⁴⁷ Commenting in the first exhibition brochure, Walter Abell characterized the range of works that would be presented in the Annuals: "[They] consist of pictures which, in quality, represent some of the best work now being produced in the Maritimes. [They also] illustrate the various creative tendencies, or schools of thought, now at work in Maritime art. Traditional and experimental points of view are both represented."²⁴⁸ Abell divided these creative tendencies into three loosely defined groups, the first being those which closely followed the English academic tradition, the second were those works that reflected an Impressionist influence, and finally the work in the third group belonged to those artists who were interested in notions of 20th century modernism. In addition to Abell's grouping, based largely on technical qualities, a review of the first annual exhibition in

²⁴⁶ Letter, John Meagher, Halifax, NS, to H.O. McCurry, Ottawa, Ont, June 20, 1940. NGC Archives 5.5 M, National Gallery of Canada Fonds, Maritime Provinces Artists Ex. 1940. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁴⁷ John Meagher, "To the Members of the Maritime Art Association," 1937. NGC Archives 5.11-M F.2. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁴⁸ Walter Abell, "Foreword" *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, 1. AUASC 1900:028, Walter Abell Fonds, Ephemera. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

the *Charlottetown Guardian* remarked: “The paintings are decidedly varied both in subject matter and execution.”²⁴⁹

The first, and what can be termed the most traditional, of these three groups were produced by the “veterans” of the Maritime art community, such as John Hammond and Elizabeth S. Nutt. Their practice, as Abell wrote, stemmed from the “old masters” and can be characterized by their demonstration of “quiet colour, soft light, a restrained but sensitive handling of the brush, and a feeling for poetic appeal in subject matter.”²⁵⁰ Citing Corot, Whistler and Henner as inspirations, Abell also situated their work within the art historical context of Canada’s sympathy toward “nineteenth-century romantic naturalism.”²⁵¹ Halifax artist Leroy Zwicker believed their work was indicative of the “English academic” tradition: “The word English in art means a great deal. It means the opposite of intellectualized. It means kindly and affectionate. It frequently means technically competent. It usually means romantic.”²⁵² Zwicker also identified Elizabeth Nutt’s advocacy of this traditional approach at the NSCA as a significant factor in its popularity among artists in the region.²⁵³ Moreover, the work of these artists, according to Paikowsky, “ignored the well-established ideas of modern art in favour of traditional attitudes and maintenance of the *status-quo*.”²⁵⁴ It was these traditional attitudes, as illustrated in the work of Hammond, such as *Herring Fishing, Bay of Fundy* and Nutt’s

²⁴⁹ “Interesting Art Exhibit,” *Charlottetown Guardian*, April 24, 1936, 6.

²⁵⁰ Abell, “Foreword” *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, 2. AUASC 1900:028, Walter Abell Fonds, Ephemera. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁵¹ John Alford, “Trends in Canadian Art,” *University Toronto Quarterly* 14.2 (January 1945): 168.

²⁵² Leroy Zwicker, “Art in Nova Scotia,” *Canadian Art* 3.1 (October-November 1945): 14-15.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁵⁴ Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures*, 8.

George Street, Halifax, shown in the 1935-36 annual, that held sway in Maritime art production in the early 20th century (Figs 12 & 13).²⁵⁵

The work of Henry Rosenberg and Stanley Royle also exemplified a concern for a traditional approach yet demonstrated tendencies toward the “experimental,” characteristic of the second group. The artists, whose works fall within Abell’s second group, demonstrate an interest in qualities of colour and light characteristic of the Impressionist movement. Describing these works he wrote: “The colour becomes brighter, the atmosphere more luminous, the brush-work bolder and more apparent. The artist seeks to render the living, vibrant quality of nature; to express the delight of keen senses as they respond to the ever-changing lights and colours and movements of the natural world.”²⁵⁶ The influence of Impressionism among Canadian artists, according to Graham McInnes, provided them with the tools for a newly developed “interpretation of the Canadian landscape,” which is often identified for its decorative treatment of the subject.²⁵⁷ According to Paikowsky, among artists of the Maritime region the influence and popularity of the impressionist tradition simply became the means to an end.²⁵⁸ For example, a review of the 1937-38 annual states that the “prevailing note of the exhibition is decorative.”²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ John Hammond exhibited only once in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, in 1935-6, with *Dinant on the Meuse, Belgium*. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate this painting and have provided *Herring Fishing, Bay of Fundy* as an illustration of his work.

²⁵⁶ Abell, “Foreword” *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, 2, 3. AUASC 1900:028, Walter Abell Fonds, Ephemera. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁵⁷ Graham McInnes, *Canadian Art* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada, Ltd., 1950), 42.

²⁵⁸ Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures*, 10.

²⁵⁹ “Oil Paintings by Maritime Artists. Wolfville Lady’s Pictures Included in Group Now on Display at Acadia University,” *The Acadian*, March 10, 1938, 1.

In the Maritimes the influence of impressionism resulted in work that was described by Abell as uniquely regional for its depictions of coastal scenes: “Landscape is the typical subject, with coast scenes naturally playing an important part in the Maritime version of the style.”²⁶⁰ The term “regionalism” implied an identifiable Maritime art, although the term itself is rather ambiguous. Art historian and critic Virginia Nixon, cites J. Russell Harper’s definition that it “is a response to a region, or the place being painted.”²⁶¹ In her article “The Concept of ‘Regionalism’ in Canadian Art History,” Nixon also states that the term regionalism “suggests an intimate, in some cases almost mystical, absorption with a particular place.”²⁶² Works often classified as regional in nature focused intensely on the land, relaying the artist’s connection with and profound knowledge of their immediate surroundings. As such, the proliferation and popularity of images depicting Nova Scotia’s Peggy’s Cove and coastal shores have come to characterize the subject matter of an identifiable *Maritime* art in the early 20th century (Fig. 14). An illustration of the physical beauty of the coast, Peggy’s Cove was seen as the region’s “primary symbolic landscape” and an “icon of regionality.”²⁶³

The popularity of coastal imagery, as exhibited in the MAA Annuals, is further seen in the reception of these works within the Maritime art community. The newspaper reviews covering the MAA Annuals provide an indication of how these works were

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 2.

²⁶¹ Virginia Nixon, “The Concept of ‘Regionalism’ in Canadian Art History,” *The Journal of Canadian Art History* 10.1 (1987): 33.

²⁶² Nixon, “The Concept of ‘Regionalism,’” 33.

²⁶³ Ian MacKay, “Twilight at Peggy’s Cove: Toward a Genealogy of ‘Maritimicity’ in Nova Scotia,” *Border/Lines* (Summer 1988): 29-37, quoted in Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures*, 10; Margaret Conrad and James Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Region in the Making*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001), 174.

received. Landscape, for example, was identified as the “favorite subject” in the first exhibition of paintings by Maritime artists.²⁶⁴ In a review of the same exhibition from the *Moncton Transcript*, only the works of the veterans of Maritime art, John Hammond, Elizabeth Nutt and Stanley Royal, were “particularly noticeable.”²⁶⁵ The *Saint John Telegraph Journal* again commented on the dominance of landscape painting and that many of the paintings attempted to “render subtle atmospheric conditions,” citing the work of Helen Beals *A March Snowstorm* and *Burt’s Corner* by Donald Cameron MacKay (1906-1979), described as a “sunny but windy day in cold colours.”²⁶⁶ Despite the growing presence of modernist trends in the work of Maritime artists, a review of the 1939-40 annual deemed the whole exhibition characteristically “conservative.”²⁶⁷ Moreover, Saint John artist Julia Crawford described the 1938-39 annual as lacking the “sparkle and daring often displayed in those of larger centers,”²⁶⁸ positioning the work of Maritime artists as more reserved and less progressive than those in Toronto or Montreal.

This dominance and privileging of land and seascape images was, according to Leroy Zwicker, “derivative of another age.”²⁶⁹ However, a growing number of Maritime

²⁶⁴ “Paintings by 31 Maritime Artists Arouse Interest,” *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, January 10, 1936, 12.

²⁶⁵ “Fine Display of Paintings in Exhibit. Works by Maritime Artists Attracting Considerable Comment,” *Moncton Transcript*, March 11, 1936, 8.

²⁶⁶ “Four Exhibitions of Paintings to be Held this Season. Maritime Artists to Head list with Display this Week,” *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, October 24, 1938, 6.

²⁶⁷ “Saint John Artists Well Represented in Exhibit Here,” *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, January 22, 1940, 6.

²⁶⁸ Julia Crawford, *Paintings in Watercolour and Pastel by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentaries 1938-39, 4. UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁶⁹ Zwicker, “Art in Nova Scotia,” 17.

artists attempted to address the “formal issues of representational art,”²⁷⁰ and exemplified Abell’s third group, whose works reflected the “turbulent currents” that mark the rise of a modernist tradition in Canadian art history.²⁷¹ These “currents,” Abell wrote, were characterized by: “lines, planes, and colors for their own sake [that] now become a dominant source of interest to the artist.” With formal concerns at the root of their approach, these artists could find beauty, or a particular “poetic” in everyday objects and subject matter, which can “set his vision aglow with a significant interplay of lines and color,” and that “Nature now becomes an inspiration for design, freely adapted to the artist’s experiments, and copied only to the degree which he may choose to copy her.”²⁷² It is noteworthy that a majority of the artists who were concerned with modernist forms and content received formal art training in the United States. For example, Miller Brittain studied at the Art Students’ League in New York from 1930-32; Mabel Killam Day had been there 1905 to 1909; Ted Campbell, Saint John artist and educator, studied at the Chicago Art Institute from 1925-29; while Julia Crawford attended the Pratt Institute in New York from 1925-28; and Jack Humphrey studied at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1920-23 and the National Academy of Design in New York from 1924-29.

Nevertheless, the modernist tradition was slow to gain acceptance in the Maritime art community. In his article “Trends in Canadian Art,” John Alford wrote about a kind of dislocation between the artist and the public that had taken place in Canadian art. This was the direct result of “a lack of common interest between the public which looks to

²⁷⁰ Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures*, 10.

²⁷¹ Abell, “Foreword” *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, 3. AUASC 1900:028, Walter Abell Fonds, Ephemera. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁷² Ibid.

pictures for the more robust and earthly human interest, and the artist sensitively endowed in interpretative imagination or in expressive craftsmanly skill.”²⁷³ For Alford, it was the work of Canadian modern artists that was on the receiving end of this disconnect: “the painters of imaginative and craftsmanly integrity (those, that is, who make the lines, forms, values, and colours of their design a means of expression, not simply of description or decoration) have been more or less dislocated in their art.”²⁷⁴ As a champion of a modern art in the Maritime region, Abell often provided a theoretical and aesthetic frame of reference for this movement in his many writings. At a lecture at the Art Association of Montreal (now the Montreal Museum of Fine Art) in the Fall of 1939, he praised the work of contemporary art movements as being the most rewarding to study, however, they were also the “least appreciated because they [were] least understood.”²⁷⁵ However, Abell’s support of an art that demonstrated a “significant interplay of lines and color,” as Canadian art historian Charles Hill has observed, is not to be considered a support of abstraction. Abell believed that “visual elements reduced to an abstract state are limited in the range, the variety and the subtlety of the relations to which they can give rise.... Its aesthetic effect is limited to ... the ‘decorative’ level.”²⁷⁶

In the Maritimes this lack of critical support for a modernist aesthetic was a point of contention. In his article “The Problem of Artists in the Maritimes,” Jack Humphrey laments the lack of experimental creativity among artists and public in the region:

²⁷³ Alford, “Trends in Canadian Art,” 173.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Walter Abell quoted in “Support is Asked for Canadian Art. Contemporary Painting is Most Rewarding Study, Prof. W. Abell says,” *The Gazette* (Montreal), November 18, 1939, 18.

²⁷⁶ Walter Abell, “The Limits of Abstraction,” *The American Magazine of Art* 27.12 (December 1935) 738, quoted in Hill *Canadian Painting in the Thirties*, 12.

It is extremely difficult to paint with a healthy regard for one's immediate environment and its pressures or lack of them, and at the same time to flourish in the light of that fruitful freedom, a freedom which is not merely allowed but expected of painters in some more developed places. [One must] imagine himself living and working in a creative stream of consciousness which in reality may not exist in his community.... He is compelled, in order to survive, to train or attract followers within his immediate reach.²⁷⁷

This situation was also partially the result, as Paikowsky has noted, of “the non-existence of a museum [which] meant that there was no symbolic institution for the artists to support or equally to react against. In the art history of many other provinces, the museum was often a focus for the expression of the will and the ambitions of its art community, a rallying point for its achievements and its frustrations.”²⁷⁸

While the first two groups, English academic and “Impressionistic,” can be defined by their traditional approach, this is not to say that those who fell within Abell's third grouping did not engage with the land. However, what sets these landscapes apart is their departure from an “English” approach to one that demonstrates a concern for the formal aspects of art. For example, in a Wolfville review of the 1937-38 exhibition of Maritime painters, the landscape works were deemed to be seen “in the modern way,” which included Leroy Zwicker's *End of the Wharf* (Fig. 15).²⁷⁹ Additionally, in the exhibition brochure for the 1938-39 annual Julia Crawford attributed the success of Lillian Clark's work *Sunset at Driftwood* to the “stylized painting, simplified to

²⁷⁷ Jack Humphrey, “The Problem of the Artist in the Maritimes,” 71.

²⁷⁸ Paikowsky, *Nova Scotian Pictures*, 8.

²⁷⁹ “Oil Paintings by Maritime Artists. Wolfville Lady's Pictures Included in Group Now on Display at Acadia University,” *The Acadian*, March 10, 1938, 1.

emphasize the forms of clouds and color of clouds and river.”²⁸⁰ Referring to Jack Humphrey’s work in a general way, Walter Abell explained: “while dealing with local, specific subject matter (regionalism) through his treatment of it transcends it – to be a truly modern artist.”²⁸¹ The landscapes of Mabel Killam Day are yet another example of a modernist approach to the land and illustrate her concern for colour and form and the portrayal of the land through large masses and interesting shapes – “the objective landscape.”²⁸² Of her work *Cape Breton, N.S.*, exhibited in the first showing of Maritime paintings, it was described by fellow artist Gwendolyn Hales as taking “on a vitality and life totally lacking in many paintings.”²⁸³

The artists whose work is most illustrative of the modernist movement in the Maritimes are Jack Humphrey and Avery Shaw. In this instance, “modernism” refers to an emphasis on the formal elements of painting, methods of composition, and the stylization of subject matter, in order to achieve an aesthetic response. In describing Jack Humphrey’s work *Things on a Bench* in a review of the 1935-36 annual, Gwendolyn Hales wrote that aside from its clever treatment of the objects depicted it was illustrative of “a man not afraid to say what he thinks.”²⁸⁴ Avery Shaw’s work *Flower Study*, published in the 1936 *The Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, was described as being very

²⁸⁰ Julia Crawford, “Paintings in Watercolour and Pastel by Artists residing in the Maritime Provinces,” Maritime Art Association Exhibition Commentaries, 1938-39, 6. UNBHIL, Mary Hashey-Coughey Folder. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

²⁸¹ Walter Abell, “East is West – Thoughts on the Unity and Meaning of Contemporary Art,” *Canadian Art* 11.2 (Winter 1954): 44-51, 73, quoted in Gemey Kelly, “Regionalist of Canadian ‘Modern’? Jack Humphrey’s Claim to Fame,” *Journal of Canadian Art History* 27 (2006): 83.

²⁸² “Mabel Killam Day: The First of a Series of Articles on the Artists of the Maritime Provinces” *Maritime Art* 1.1 (October 1940): 10.

²⁸³ Hales, “Maritime Artists’ Pictures on View,” *The Acadian*, December 12, 1935, 10.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

different from the other works in the exhibition (Fig. 15). Both paintings are indicative of the popularity of still life and flower paintings as a means to explore the formal qualities of a work and to play with line, shapes and colour. Again, in a review of the 1940 annual in Saint John, Humphrey's work *A Mexican Town* and *Tracks at Gilbert's Lane* are noted for their "customary aptitude in colour and pattern"²⁸⁵ (Fig. 16). These works are also an indication of the popularity of the city and streetscapes as subject matter, particularly among those artists who demonstrated an interest in modernism. While these artists promoted a modern aesthetic within the Maritime region, they were aware of the place of their practice in relation to that of international modernisms. As Jack Humphrey remarked in a review of the 1940-41 annual: "While there are no 'madmen of art,' no abstractions, no surrealism, nothing to frighten the most conservative, this does not mean that there are not interesting and progressive pictures to be seen."²⁸⁶

Although there is little to no visual documentation of any of the MAA Annual exhibition installations, the titles of the works in the exhibition brochures provide a sense of the *types* of subject matter that dominated. These types, or groupings, of subjects can be categorized as images of the land or rural villages, marine or seascape, the town or city, portrait or figure studies, genre, flower and still life paintings. The inability to accurately categorize a large portion of these works beyond what their title suggests is further confounded by the propensity for changing the titles of art works over time, especially in relation to those of lesser-known Maritime artists. Unfortunately, this

²⁸⁵ "Saint John Artists Well Represented in Exhibit Here," 6,7.
The work referenced, *Mexican Market Scene*, c. 1938-1941, is provided as an illustration of Humphrey's work from this period.

²⁸⁶ Jack Humphrey, "Exhibition of Art Here Represents all of East. Work Displayed at M.R.A.'s is of Great Interest to Public Generally," *Evening Times-Globe* (Saint John), November 26, 1940, 6.

situation limits any conclusions that could be drawn regarding the influence of modernist tendencies within the Maritime art community.

While the dominance of the landscape tradition within the Maritime region has been illustrated above, portraits and still life paintings, as art historian Dianne O'Neill has observed, "represented the bread-and-butter" for artists in the Maritime Provinces.²⁸⁷ From year to year in the MAA Annual portraiture and figurative work held their own, and were often described as "sensitively handled character studies."²⁸⁸ *Artie* by Elizabeth Lovitt Cann of Yarmouth, NS, is exemplary of this kind of character study (Fig. 17). Exhibited in the 1941-42 MAA annual it demonstrates Cann's subtle use of the figure to portray what art historian and critic Gemey Kelly has described as, "the life, rather than the study of the figure."²⁸⁹ Other figural works include Marion Bond's (1900-1965) piece *Five and Ten*, exhibited in the 1940-41 annual, depicting two young black girls, and, Ted Campbell's 1943 work *Portrait of a Cleric*, was identified in the *Sydney Post-Record* as standing out among the portrait work exhibited in the 1942-43 Annual (Figs. 18 & 19).²⁹⁰ Jack Humphrey also exhibited a portrait of a young girl entitled *Edith White* in 1939-40 and *Boy in Leather Coat*, 1941-42 (Figs. 20 & 21). These works are just two examples of the many portraits of the children of Saint John by him and by Brittain, often described as a reflection of their awareness of American art. But Humphrey's work was not intended as a social comment since, according to Kelly, he "never avowed an interest in regional

²⁸⁷ Dianne O'Neill, *Diamond Jubilee: Nova Scotia Society of Artists* (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1997), 3.

²⁸⁸ "Paintings by 31 Maritime Artists Arouse Interest. William Brodie Recalls Organization of Saint John Art Club," *Saint John Telegraph Journal*, January 10, 1936, 12.

²⁸⁹ Gemey Kelly, *Elizabeth Cann* (Halifax: Dalhousie University Art Gallery, 1987), 5.

²⁹⁰ "Art Exhibition at "Y" Attracts Many Admirers," *Sydney Post-Record*, February 26, 1943, 5.

realism.”²⁹¹ Rather, Humphrey often insisted that his portraits demonstrated a “universal, rather than regional appeal,”²⁹² clearly defining a modernist perspective.

The works presented in the MAA Annuals were influenced to varying degrees by the 20th century modernist movement and illustrate a move away from traditional or academic approaches to the figure, a move indicative of late 19th and early 20th century Canadian painting. However, they do not illustrate the same level of social engagement or political concern as the work of artists working in Toronto or Montreal, such as Parasekva Clark or Marion Dale Scott. This is not to say that the social concerns were entirely overlooked by artists in the Maritime region. Miller Brittain’s work, for example, is one of the few examples from the MAA annuals that demonstrates a connection with the ideas categorized as social realism.²⁹³ Just as Humphrey expressed his displeasure for the lack of innovation in the Maritime art community, so too did Miller Brittain: “I have no patience with those individual who think of pictures merely as embellishments to a decorative scheme.... A picture ought to emerge from the midst of life and be in no sense divorced from it.”²⁹⁴ *Longshoreman*, shown in the 1939-40 annual, described by

²⁹¹ Gemey Kelly, “Regionalist of Canadian ‘Modern’? Jack Humphrey’s Claim to Fame,” *Journal of Canadian Art History* 27 (2006): 87.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ In Canadian art during the 1930s and 1940s there is a movement away from the land toward an interest in human affairs. In this movement, “we see the formulation of ideas about representation of the urban and the social *in art*, attendant discussions about a social role *for art*, and the relationship between art and the political climate of the times.” Gemey Kelly, “A Definite Image: The Representation of the Social in Canadian Art of the 1930s and 1940,” in *Full Space: Modern Art from the Firestone Collection of Canadian Art*, (Ottawa: The Ottawa Art Gallery, 2004), 46.

²⁹⁴ Miller Brittain quoted in Hill, *Canadian Painting in the Thirties*, 98.

Humphrey as being “rich in human quality,” is a poignant example of Britain’s social engagement with the people of Saint John (Fig. 22).²⁹⁵

In providing the first comprehensive view of work being accomplished in the Maritime Provinces, the MAA Annuals allow for an identification of the dominant trends in art production between 1935 and 1945. While the concept of a purely Maritime art is questionable, the dominance of the land and coast as a subject among artists in the region is undeniable. With many in the region being confronted with a modernist aesthetic for the first time, it is not surprising that the MAA annual exhibitions can be deemed characteristically conservative in their exemplification of a more traditional approach. However, through the MAA annuals, as the first unified exhibition platform for artists in the region, there was a growing exposure to and support of a modern art in the Maritime Provinces.

While shows borrowed from the NGC formed the basis of the Association’s exhibition circuit, the MAA executive also organized a series of exhibitions to tour in the Maritime region. Based largely on the work of Maritime artists, they reflected the regional nature of the Association. In addition to these shows is the Association’s Annual member’s exhibition, which demonstrates the dominant trends in art production at this time, exhibiting works that represent a regional Maritime art and those which followed closely the modernism of the early 20th century. Circulating these exhibitions throughout the Maritime Provinces, the MAA not only expanded the audience for art throughout the region but also provided a greater exposure to professional and amateur artists and students working in the Maritimes. Thus, illustrating the actions of the MAA in the development of a united regional community in the arts.

²⁹⁵ Jack Humphrey, “Exhibition of Art Here Represents All of East,” *Evening Times-Globe*, 6.

CONCLUSION

While the history of the Maritime Art Association has been documented by scholars like Sandra Paikowsky and Kirk Niegarth, its programming has yet to be fully addressed. Through an analysis of the MAA programming, I wish to highlight the significant effect it had on the nature and development of the Maritime art community. The MAA was the first regional art association in Canada and “aroused [art interest] in a way nothing else could.” Through the mobilization of geographically disparate art groups, the experience gained by those involved, according to the Carnegie Canadian Committee, was seen to “be of great value in other districts in Canada.”²⁹⁶ The cultural and educational programming of the MAA was intended for a uniquely regional audience with the objective of fostering art activities in the area and promoting awareness and the appreciation of art. The MAA set a precedent among art groups in Canada and provided an example for future organization, such as the Western Canada Art Circuit and the Atlantic Provincial Art Gallery Association.

Although this thesis looks closely at the first ten years of the Maritime Art Association’s programming, the Association remained active for many years, continuing to provide cultural programming to centers throughout the Maritime region. In 1955, membership to the MAA remained consistent with twenty member-groups in fourteen centers around the Maritime Provinces. The circulation of traveling exhibitions remained the Association’s primary concern and they continued to arrange shows comprised of both Maritime art and art provided by the National Gallery of Canada.

²⁹⁶ Carnegie Canadian Committee – The Maritime Art Association. August 26, 1936. NGC Archives, 5.11-M F.1. (Viewed at the Institute, Concordia U.)

The goals of the MAA were eventually taken-up by the Atlantic Provincial Art Gallery Association (APAGA), formed in 1975. The new association maintains the MAA's founding objectives of promoting a knowledge and appreciation of art and the fostering art activities in the Maritime Provinces, stating: "[APAGA] encourages the closest possible co-operation among art gallery, museum and artists to assist in the development of visual art centers in the Atlantic Provinces."²⁹⁷ The APAGA has a similar form and function to that of the MAA, representing art galleries, artist-run centers and practicing artists throughout Atlantic Canada. Encouraging co-operation among all levels APAGA serves as an advisory body in professional matters, as well as liaison for art galleries and museums throughout Canada, in order to encourage the development of the visual arts in the Atlantic Provinces.

Founded in 1935, the Maritime Art Association was the first of its kind in Canada, laying the foundation for regional art associations throughout the country. Democratic in its approach the MAA created a united arts community in the Maritime Provinces. Association programming, of lectures and an exhibition circuit, was centered on the promotion of aesthetic awareness and focused on an audience whose familiarity with the arts was limited. The MAA's annual member's exhibition provided the first comprehensive view of art works by artist from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* positioned the arts to become an arena for regional discussion, appreciation and solidarity.

²⁹⁷ Atlantic Provincial Art Gallery Association, "About APAGA," Atlantic Provincial Art Gallery Association. <http://www.apaga.ca/>.

APPENDIX A

Artists and works exhibited in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*, 1935-1945

List of artists and works as they appear in the annual exhibition brochure. Medium indicated when known.

MAA Annual 1935-6:

Works in oil.

1. Frank D. Allison, *L'Arbre Plantain*
2. G. Phil Backman, *The Hill Top*
3. Annie F. M. Beals, *Cliffs at Harborville*
4. Gertrude A. Bent, *Color Note, N.S. Handicraft*
5. Marion Bond, *Sea Sculpture*
6. Lillian Clark, *Portrait*
7. A.R. Cobb, *Holywater Font*
8. Julia T. Crawford, *My Purple Lady*
9. Frieda I. Creelman, *Sunlight on Cottage*
10. Mabel K. Day, *Cape Breton, Nova Scotia*
11. Frances K. Forbes, *Cyclamen*
12. Violet A. Gillett, *The Old McVeeters Place*
13. Gwendolyn Hales, *Village of Prospect*
14. Katherine Hammond, *Figure Study*
15. John Hammond, *Dinant on the Meuse, Belgium*
16. Norman K. Hay, *Storm Warnings*
17. Jack Humphrey, *Things on a Bench*
18. Gregory McGrath, *Portrait Study*
19. Donald Cameron MacKay, *North West Arm*
20. Mollie Bell MacKay, *Silent Snow*
21. Mabel McCulloch, *Fishing Fleet, Grand Etang, C.B.*
22. Christian McKiel, *Man in Blue Shirt*
23. Elizabeth McLeod, *Flowers*
24. Elizabeth S. Nutt, *George Street, Halifax*
25. Marguerite Porter, *North West Arm, Halifax*
26. H.M. Rosenberg, *Hamadryad*
27. Stanley Royle, *Old House, Halifax*
28. Avery Shaw, *Flower Study*
29. Edith Smith, *Gray Day at Blue Rocks*
30. Marjorie H. Tozer, *Portugal Cove, Newfoundland*
31. J. Leroy Zwicker, *The Churn, Yarmouth, N.S.*

MAA Annual 1936-7:

Works in watercolour and pastel.

1. Frank D. Allison, *Autumn*
2. Helen Beales, *Flowers*
3. Annie F.M. Beales, *The Rugged Coast*
4. John Bishop, *Loyalist Graveyard & Chelsey Street*
5. Miller Brittain, *George & Portrait of a Girl*
6. D. Edwin Campbell, *Back Gardens & Autumn*
7. H. Callaghan, *Tugboat*
8. M. Lillian Clark, *Still Life*
9. Maura Cooke, *Saturday Afternoon*
10. Julia T. Crawford, *The Millstream & Silo*
11. Norman Cody, *Sybil*
12. Freida I. Creelman, *Pownell Bay, P.E.I.*
13. Frances K. Forbed, *Halifax Waterfront*
14. Violet A. Gillett, *Grand Bay & Barbara, Bob & David*
15. Kathleen Grant, *Bill Crook's Store & Stage*
16. Gwendolyn Hales, *Mill on the Gaspereau*
17. Margaret Hibbert, *Sun on Old Wood*
18. Jack Humphrey, *Houses West Saint John, River Boats, & North Head, Grand Manan*
19. Mary F. Landry, *Portugal Cove*
20. Donald Cameron MacKay, *Sundown*
21. Molly Bell MacKay, *Gaspereau*
22. Gregory McGarth, *Spar Yard*
23. Christian McKiel, *Portrait*
24. J.M.Pickins, *Even Song*
25. Margaret Porter, *Mixed Boquet*
26. Edith Smith, *Ruined Castle*
27. Avery Shaw, *Fish House, Gold Mine, & The Boulder*
28. Ruth Salter Wainwright, *The Mill*
29. Nellie E. Walsh, *Daisies*
30. Pearl V. Woods, *Decorative Panel*
31. LeRoy Zwicker, *Unloading*

MAA Annual 1937-8:

Works in oil and watercolour.

1. Frank D. Allison, *Court of Justice Fez*
2. Mabel Anderson, *Middle River in Cape Breton*
3. Earl Baily, *Herring Rock, & Winter Fishing* (watercolour)
4. Marion Bond, *The Loitering Brook & Spring on the North West Arm*
5. Miller Brittain, *Self Portrait*
6. Ted Campbell, *Marigolds & Still Life*

7. Mrs. Peggy Curry, *The Old Packhorse Bridge & The Derwent Inn, Derbyshire, England*
8. Mrs. Thos. J. Coughy, *St. Andrews' Island*
9. Julia Crawford, *The Window Sill*
10. Mabel K. Day, *View from a Balcony*
11. Francis K. Forbes, *Ferguson's Cove & Evening at Peggy's Cove*
12. Violet A. Gillett, *Change of Tide, Saint John*
13. Kathleen Grant, *Rock Bound Coast, Nova Scotia*
14. Gwendolyn Hales, *Autumn in the Gaspereaux Valley & Peggy's Cove*
15. J.R. Holohan, *Fishing Boats*
16. Richard Howe, *Smelt Fishing*
17. Jack Humphrey, *Still Life*
18. Verna M. Josey, *Still Life*
19. Mary Landry, *Port Maitland & Cape St. Mary's*
20. (Miss) Jean Young MacInnis, *Mrs. Lena Townsend*
21. Donald Cameron MacKay, *Shut-In Island*
22. Mollie Bell MacKay, *Backwater*
23. Mabel McCulloch (Mrs. D.M. Gass), *Margaree Village, C.B.*
24. C. Gregory McGarth, A.N.S.C.A., *Egerton, N.S.*
25. Mary Clair Merchant, *Birches at the Dingle*
26. Margaret L. Munro, *Portrait of an old Man*
27. Mrs. F.E. Pearce, *Land Gate, Rye, England*
28. Miss (Edith A. Smith), *Petite Riviere Nova Scotia*
29. Ruth Starr, *Picnic & Distance*
30. Carleton Wilson, *Hope*
31. Stanley Royle, A.R.C.A., R.B.A., *Carfe Castle*
32. J. Leroy Zwicker, *End of the Wharf*

MAA Annual 1938-9:

Works in watercolour and pastel.

1. Frank D. Allison, *Costa Brava*
2. Mildred Atkinson, *A Fisherman's Landing*
3. Helen D. Beales, *Peonies*
4. Mrs. F.H. Beales, *A March Snow Storm*
5. John Bishop, *Caboose & Fort La Tour*
6. Marion Bond, *The Road to the Lighthouse & The Road from Peggy's*
7. Miller Brittain, *Warehouse*
8. Howard D. Callahan, *City Bound*
9. Ted Campbell, *Kay*
10. M. Lillian Clarke, *Sunset at Driftwood & Pottery*
11. Julia T. Crawford, *At Kibby Cook's*
12. Peggy Curry, *The Old Mill & Shadows*
13. Frances Forbes, *The Fair & Ferguson's Village*
14. Violet A. Gillett, *The Mill, Juniper*
15. Kathleen Grant, *Gladioli*

16. Gwendolyn Hales, *Yellow Barn*
17. Margaret Hibbert, *Water Lillies & Still Life*
18. J.R. Holohan, *Birches at Night*
19. Richard Howe, *After a Busy Day*
20. Jack Humphrey, *Main Street & Market, Taxco*
21. Helen W. Kinghorn, *The Hazen Homestead, Oromocto, N.B.*
22. Mollie Bell MacKay, *Golden Grain*
23. Donald Camercon MacKay, *Turfing & Burt's Corner*
24. C. Gregory McGrath, *Boats and Shanties, Portuguese Cove*
25. Janet C. McKean, *Along Market Street, Halifax, N.S.*
26. Lillian F. Putnam, *A Street in St. Petersburg & The Bungalow*
27. Edith A. Smith, *The Fishing Station & Ice Cakes Adrift*
28. Ruth S. Wainwright, *Cape North, C.B*
29. Marguerite Porter Zwicker, *The Village Church & Tulips*

MAA Annual 1939-40:

Works in oil and watercolour.

1. Daisy Baig, *Still Life*
2. Helen Beals, *Hydranges*
3. Marion Bond, *Modesty Cove & Repairs*
4. Miller Brittain, *Portrait of Mrs. Hazen, Longshoremen, Boys playing, & Quick Lunch*
5. Howard Callahan, *Beyond the Suburbs*
6. Ted Campbell, *Jack & Arthur*
7. Julia Crawford, *The Lily*
8. Mabel K. Day, *Salmon River*
9. Violet A. Gillett, *Melicite Reservation*
10. Kathleen Grant, *Old Willow, Little Harbour, N.S.*
11. Gwendolyn Hales, *Nova Scotia's Rockbound Coast & Fishing Village*
12. Minnie C. Hewitt, *Marine Slip, Dartmouth, N.S.*
13. Margaret C. Hibbert, -- *And Points West & Pattern*
14. Jack Humphrey, *Mexican Tour, Tracks at Gilberts Lane & Edith White*
15. J. Mason Hutchison, *Rocks at Bay Shore*
16. J.A. McCaffery, *Harry*
17. Mrs. Christian McKiel, *Portrait of a little French Girl*
18. Elizabeth S. Nutt, *Autumn on the North West Arm*
19. Annie Louise Ricker, *Waterfall & A Foggy Day, Yarmouth*
20. Stanley Royle, *Moonlight on Snow, Corfe Castle, Derbyshire*
21. Margaret Simple, *Gray Morning*
22. Edith A. Smith, *Ramparts of the Sea*
23. Mary J. Taylor, *Flowers*
24. R. Salter Wainwright, *Boats at Ingonish*
25. Faith Wood, *Portrait of Frances & Dawn on the Rocks, Peggy's Cove, N.S.*
26. Leon Zwerling, *Edith*
27. Leroy Zwicker, *Brodder Keeler*

28. Marguerite Zwicker, *Calla Lilies & Margaree Harbour, C.B.*

MAA Annual 1940-1:

Work in oil and watercolour.

1. Enid Alexander, *Bernice*
2. Daisy Baig, *Musical Friends*
3. E. Earl Bailey, *Lunenburg Shipyard*
4. Helen Beals, *Road to the Wharf*
5. Mrs. A.F. Beals, *Cliffs at Isle Haute*
6. Marion Bond, *Five and Ten*
7. John Bishop, *Landscape*
8. Miller Brittain, *The Ghouls & Three Longshoremen*
9. Ted Campbell, *Portrait of a Young Man*
10. Henrietta M. Clark, *Flower Shop*
11. Beatrice Comeau, *Green Vase*
12. Julia T. Crawford, *At the Pier*
13. Mabel K. Day, *Sandy Cove, N.S*
14. Mabel McCulloch Gass, *The Brook*
15. Colin H. Falconer, *Still Life*
16. Gwendolyn Hales, *Wolfville, N.S.*
17. Jack Humphrey, *Boat Sketch*
18. J. Mason Hutchison, *Early Morning*
19. Margaret C. Hibbert, *Fishnets*
20. Lucy Jarvis, *Portrait Study*
21. D.C. Lockhart, *Portrait*
22. Ellen T. Lindsay, *An Old Willow Pattern*
23. Marjory MacIntyre, *Snow in the City & Trinity Spire*
24. Christian McKiel, *Flowers in an Old Teapot*
25. Margaret Eunice Nocholson, *Gladioli*
26. Maxwell Pearn, *Kelly*
27. Lillian Putnam, *Sand Dunes*
28. Annie Louis Ricker, *Wash Day*
29. Stanley Royale, *The Stillness of Dawn*
30. Margaret Semple, *Rock Formation*
31. Edith A. Smith, *On the Nova Scotia Coast*
32. Ruth F. Starr, *Still Life with Pears & Remnant Counter*
33. Mary Taylor, *In June*
34. John B. Taylor, *Skiers & Preacher*
35. John Thorne, *Old Fishhouse*
36. Jean F. Tweedie, *Chrysanthemums*
37. Ruth Salter Wainwright, *Drying Nets*
38. Peter Whalley, *Cargo*
39. E. A.A. Woodburn, *Clover & Winter Scene*
40. David Whitzman, *Self Portrait*
41. Faith Wood, *Zinnias*

42. Leon Zwerling, *Barbara*
43. Marguerite Zwicker, *Brine Washed Ledge & Maroon and White*
44. Leroy Zwicker, *Backyard & Maritime*

MAA exhibition of non-professional artists 1940-1:

1. Robert Annand, *Fisherman*
2. G.A. Brass, *The Last Chapter*
3. Mabel K. Day, *A Portrait*
4. W.C. Francis, *Wet Night*
5. Lois E. Fraser, *Peggy's Cove*
6. Mrs. Joyce Galloway, *Study No. 1*
7. Gladys M. Gesner, *April Shower*
8. J. Russel Harper, *Time Tide and Eternity*
9. Mary W. Hashey (Mrs. L.F.), *Still Life*
10. Maxine Hughson (Mrs. H.G.), *Ocean Still Life*
11. D.C. Lochart, *Woods*
12. Beulah H. MacCready, *Remnants of Boats and Wharf, Maine Coast*
13. John Maxwell, *Still Life*
14. Aileen Meagher, *Fungus*
15. F.H. Morris, *7 Mile Board*
16. Betty Mosher, *Battered Barge and Boats*
17. Mrs. L.H. Neatby, *Blue Rocks*
18. Frederick Nicholas, *Winter, Cobequid Mountains*
19. Dorothy Parsons, *Woodard's Cove*
20. O.A. Phillips, *Chinese Lanterns*
21. G. Piechotowna, *Still Life*
22. Fay Ritchie, *Harvest*
23. Mrs. Katherine Roberts, *Mild Winter*
24. M.E. Ross, *Casino*
25. Shirley Robinson, *The Brown Cap*
26. Morris A. Scovil, *Harvest*
27. Mrs. George Seath, *Wilson's Beach, Campobello*
28. Dorothy M. Sleep, *Jane*
29. Mrs. Ashley Smith, *Driftwood*
30. Marjorie G.C. Taylor, *Woodland*
31. D.P. Tingley, *Still Life*
32. Brigid Toole, *Abandoned Quarry*
33. Catherine Weld, *From Citadel Hill*
34. Alfred Whitehead, *Zinnias*

MAA Annual 1941-2:

Works in oil, watercolour, pastel and graphic art.

1. Daisy Baig, *Portrait of a Chinaman & Still Life Study*
2. Frances Forbes Bayne, *Fish Stores*

3. John Bishop, *Moss Glen & Early Autumn*
4. Marion Bond, *Dutch Village & Flower Study*
5. Miller Brittain, *Entanglement & Excursion*
6. Ted Campbell, *West Saint John & New River Farmer*
7. Elizabeth L. Cann, *Artie*
8. Alfred Connor, *Tyneham*
9. Julia T. Crawford, *The Quarry & Far Horizons*
10. Mrs. Frieda I. Creelam, *Below Zero & White Frost and Snow*
11. Peggy Curry, *Ingonish, Cape Breton*
12. Mabel K. Day, *Fisherman's Home & Stately Ladies*
13. Colin H. Falconer, *White Heat*
14. Mabel McCullough Gass, *Elms*
15. Violet A. Gillett, *Country Dance & Flowers*
16. Gwendolyn Hales, *Building a Scallop Boat*
17. Mrs. Lawrence Hashey, *Still Life*
18. Margaret Hibbert, *Shadows of Evening to Come & Acacias in Winter*
19. Richard Howe, *Pulp Yard – Winter & Ice Bound*
20. Jack Humphrey, *Boy in Leather Coat & Taxco – South*
21. J. Mason Hutchison, *Saint's Rest & Low Tide*
22. Lucy Jarvis, *Portrait Study & College Hill*
23. Mrs. Helen W. Kinghorn, *Winter*
24. Mary Florence Landry, *Boats at Sunset*
25. D.C. Lockhart, *Portrait*
26. Morna I MacLellan, *Nocturne*
27. Mrs. Christian McKiel, *Pictou (From Seacrest)*
28. Stanley Royle, *Grey Morning & Meditation*
29. Mrs. Margaret Semple, *Still Life & Boats in Fog*
30. Edith A. Smith, *Incoming Tide, Lunenburg Harbour*
31. Mrs. Joyce Swannell, *Elfin Garden*
32. John B. Taylor, *Summer Birches & Nature's Castle*
33. John Thorn, *Gramp*
34. R. Salter Wainwright, *Along the Sliss, Cape Breton*
35. David D. Whitzman, *Naomi & Cecelia*
36. Evelyn R. Wright, *Reflective Study*
37. Leon Zwerling, *Lady Resting Under Hat*
38. Leroy Zwicker, *Moonlight Serenade & Autumn Twilight*
39. Marguerite Zwicker, *Backyards*

MAA annual 1942-3:

Works in oil, watercolour, pastel and graphic art.

1. Daisy Baig, *Giraffes* (lino-cut)
2. John Bishop, *Autumn Raiment* (watercolour) & *Old Barns* (watercolour)
3. D. Edwin Campbell, *Portrait* (oil) & *Old Barnes* (watercolour)
4. Norman Cody, *The Forks* (watercolour) & *Marble Cove* (watercolour)
5. Julia Crawford, *Angel Wings* (watercolour)

6. Peggy Curry, *Spring Flowers* (oil)
7. Mabel K. Day, *Lupin* (oil)
8. Lil Fenton, *Vistigia* (watercolour) & *Noonday* (watercolour)
9. Violet Gillett, *August Fruits* (watercolour) & *Late Afternoon, Winter* (opaque watercolour on glass)
10. Gwendolyn Hales, *The Harbour* (watercolour)
11. Mary Hashey, *Cyclamen* (oil)
12. Jack Humphrey, *Portrait No. 2* (oil) & *Waterfront Street* (oil)
13. Lucy Jarvis, *Brick Kiln* (oil)
14. Ellen T. Lindsay, *Kitchawan Woods* (watercolour) & *Where Winter Reigns* (watercolour)
15. D.C. Lockhart, *School Girl* (oil)
16. Christian McKiel, *Winter* (oil)
17. Hazel A. McLeod, *Winter Experimental Farm* (oil)
18. Stanley Royle, *Stormclouds, Saint John River Valley* (oil)
19. E. Madge Smith, *Fraser Victoria Mills* (watercolour)
20. Edith A. Smith, *Cape Breton Hills* (oil)
21. Joyce Swanell, *Impressions of Saint John* (watercolour)
22. Mrs. M. Taylor, *Quide Vidi, Newfoundland* (watercolour)
23. Sara Thomson, *Drum Major* (oil)
24. Jean Tweedie, *Larkspur* (oil)
25. Ruth Wainwright, *Birches* (watercolour)
26. Nellie E. Walsh, *Flowers and Glass* (pastel)
27. David Whitzman, *Ernie* (oil)
28. Faith Wood, *Brian* (oil) & *Up the River* (oil)
29. Leon Zwerling, *Portrait* (oil) & *Sitting Girl* (oil)
30. Marguerite Zwicker, *Poinsetta* (watercolour) & *Windswept* (watercolour)
31. John L. Bradford, *Wood Carvings*

MAA Annual 1945-6

Works in oil, watercolour and pastel.

1. Francis Forbes Bayne, *The Mill*
2. Helen Beals, *Apples*
3. Howard Berry, *Old Flowers*
4. John Bishop, *Harbour Street*
5. D. Edwin Campbell, *Trees*
6. Stanley Clark, *Sunny Hours*
7. Earl Caughey, *Market Wharf*
8. Julia Crawford, *On Guard*
9. Mabel K. Day, *Green Hills*
10. Gladys Fletcher, *Garden*
11. Violet A. Gillett, *The Shore, Rothesay*
12. Gwendolyn Hales, *The Mary E.*
13. Mary Hashey, *Bay View*
14. Jack Humphrey, *City from Pokiok*

15. H.W. Kinghorn, *Tree Study*
16. Muriel Love, *Unicorn & Dragon*
17. Christian McKiel, *Hollyhocks*
18. M.E. Miller, *Waterloo Row, Fredericton N.B.*
19. Frederick Nicholas, *Old Houses, Winter*
20. Francis Peacock, *Old Barnes*
21. Max Pearn, *Canadian Airmen*
22. Stanley Royle, *Grey Day Perce*
23. R.L. Saunders, *Ferry in Spring*
24. Avery Shaw, *Beach*
25. Ruth Starr, *Marionettes*
26. Jean F. Tweedie, *Humphrey's Mill Bridge*
27. David Whitzman, *Salvage*
28. Evelyn Wright, *Golden Glow*
29. LeRoy Zwicker, *Peggy's Light*

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Concordia U.)
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Mount Allison University Archives (MAUA)
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Figure 1. Elizabeth Strying Nutt, *The Northwest Arm, Halifax*, 1926, oil on canvas, 51.2 cm x 61.3 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 2. Edith Smith, *Petite Riviere*, c.1937, oil on canvas, 40.6 cm x 50.8 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 3. Bertram Brooker, *Alleluiah*, c. 1929, oil on canvas, 123.0 cm x 123.3 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 4. Pegi Nicol MacLeod, *A Descent of Lilies*, 1935, oil on canvas, 122.0 cm x 91.6 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

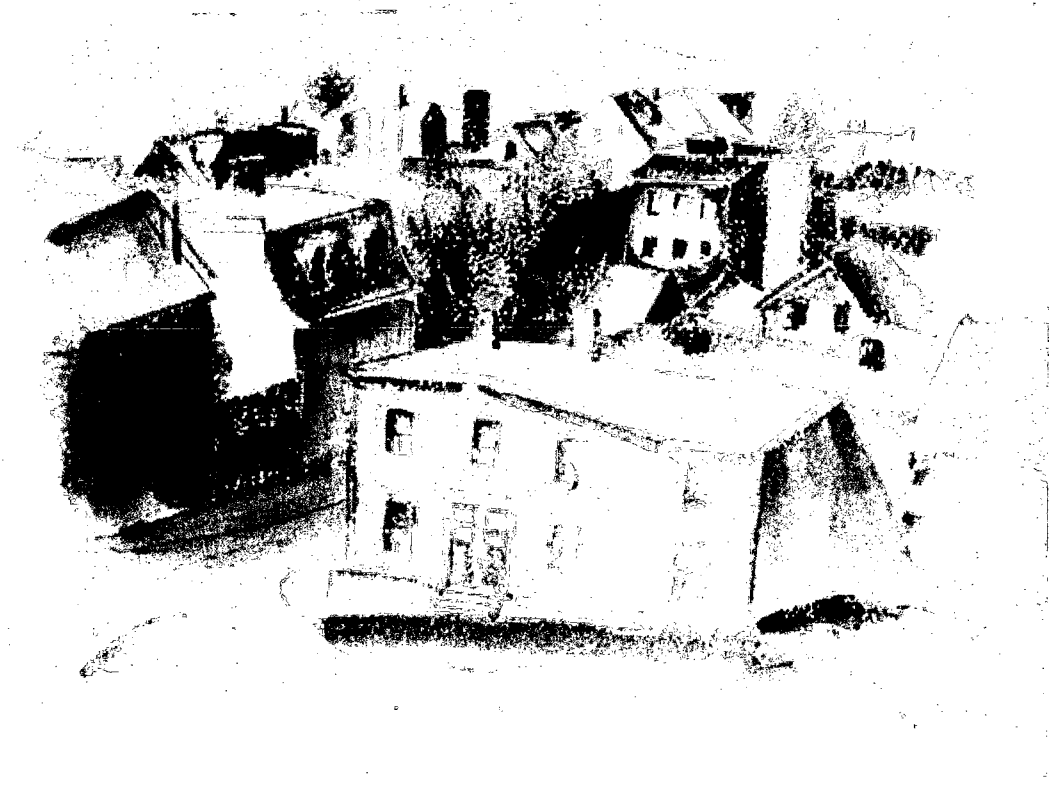


Figure 5. Jack Humphrey, *Houses*, c. 1935-1937, watercolour with pen and black ink on wove paper, 39.4 x 57.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

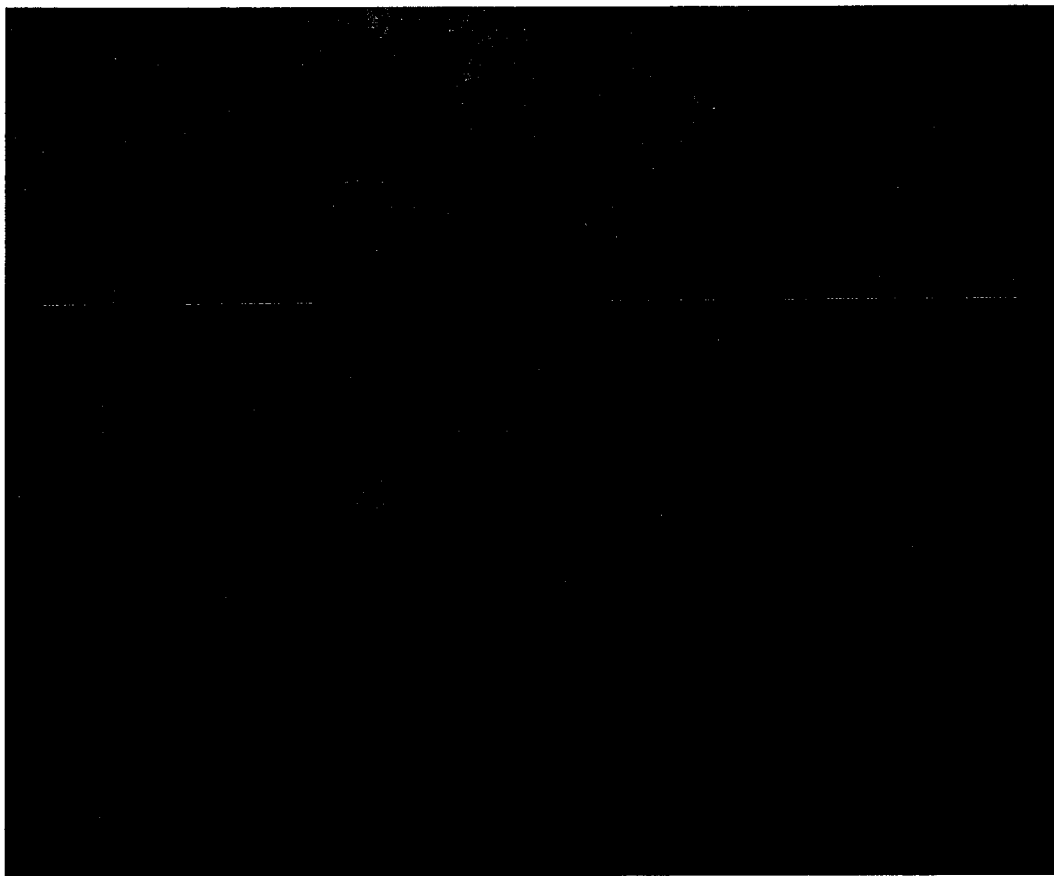


Figure. 6. Franklin Brownell, *Golden Age*, 1916, oil on canvas, 74.7 cm x 89.7 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 7. Clarence Gagnon, *Street Scene, Quebec at Night*, c. 1917, oil on canvas, 56.4 cm x 74.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 8. A.Y. Jackson, *Night, Georgian Bay*, 1913, oil on canvas, 54.3 cm x 65.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 9. Arthur Lismer, *Winter Camouflage*, 1918, oil on canvas, 71.5 cm x 91.6 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

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Figure 10. Hanging guide, written in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1937-8.

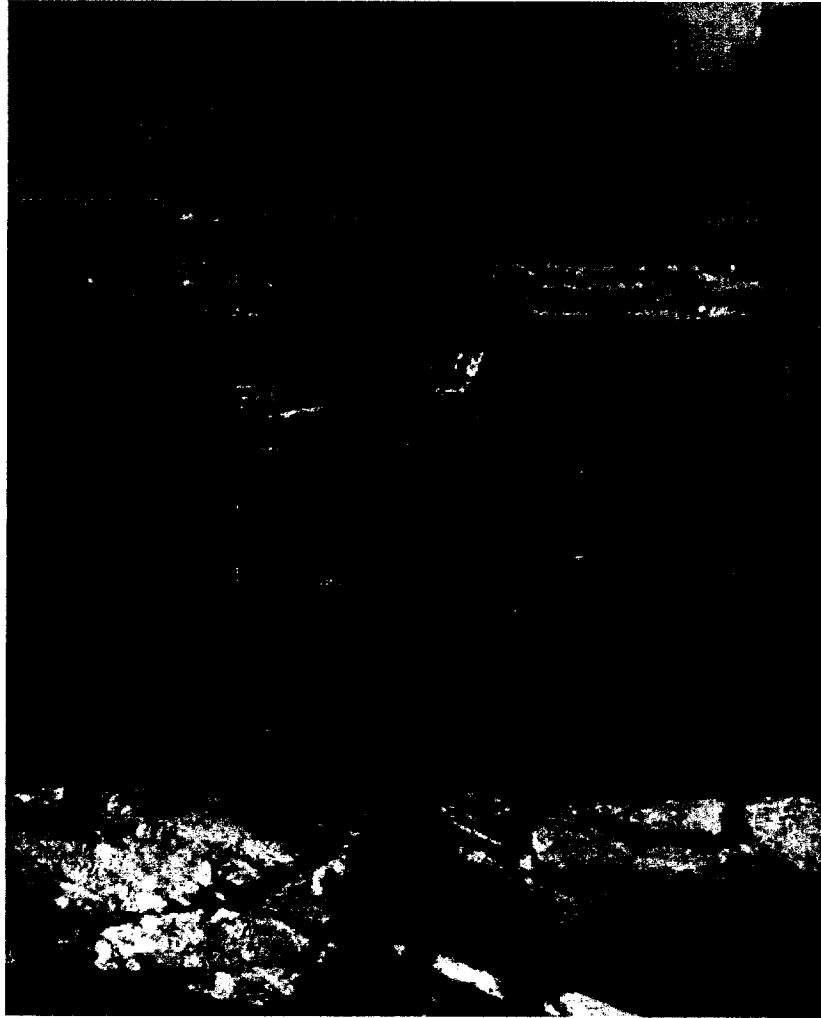


Figure 11. Elizabeth Strying Nutt, *Winter, George Street, Halifax*, 1935, oil on canvas, 61.0 cm x 50.8 cm. Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

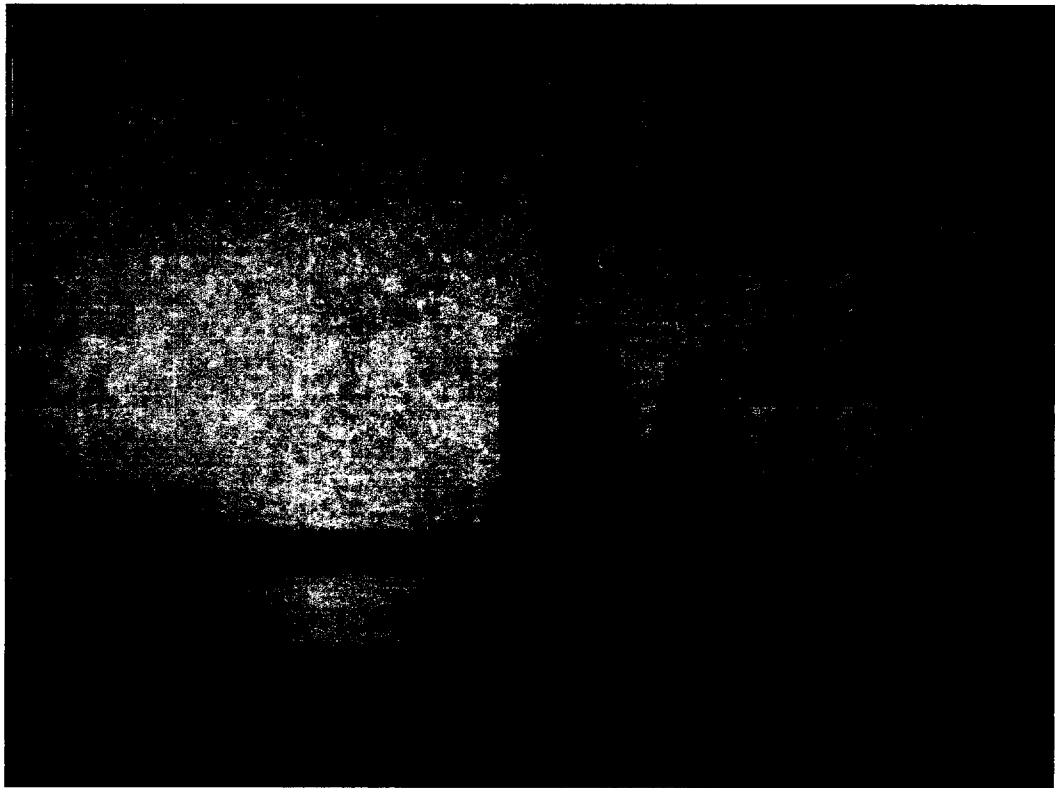


Figure 12. John Hammond, *Herring Fishing, Bay of Fundy*, 1894, oil on canvas, 81.3 cm x 107.2 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 13. Stanley Royle, *The Stillness of Dawn, Peggy's Cove, N.S.*, 1939, oil on canvas, 63.8 cm x 76.6 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 14. Leroy Zwicker, *End of the Wharf*, c. 1937, oil on canvas, 40.6 cm x 50.8 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 15. Avery Maynard Shaw, *Flower Design*, 1935, watercolour with gouache over graphite on textured wove paper, 45.7 cm x 54.6 cm. New Brunswick Museum.

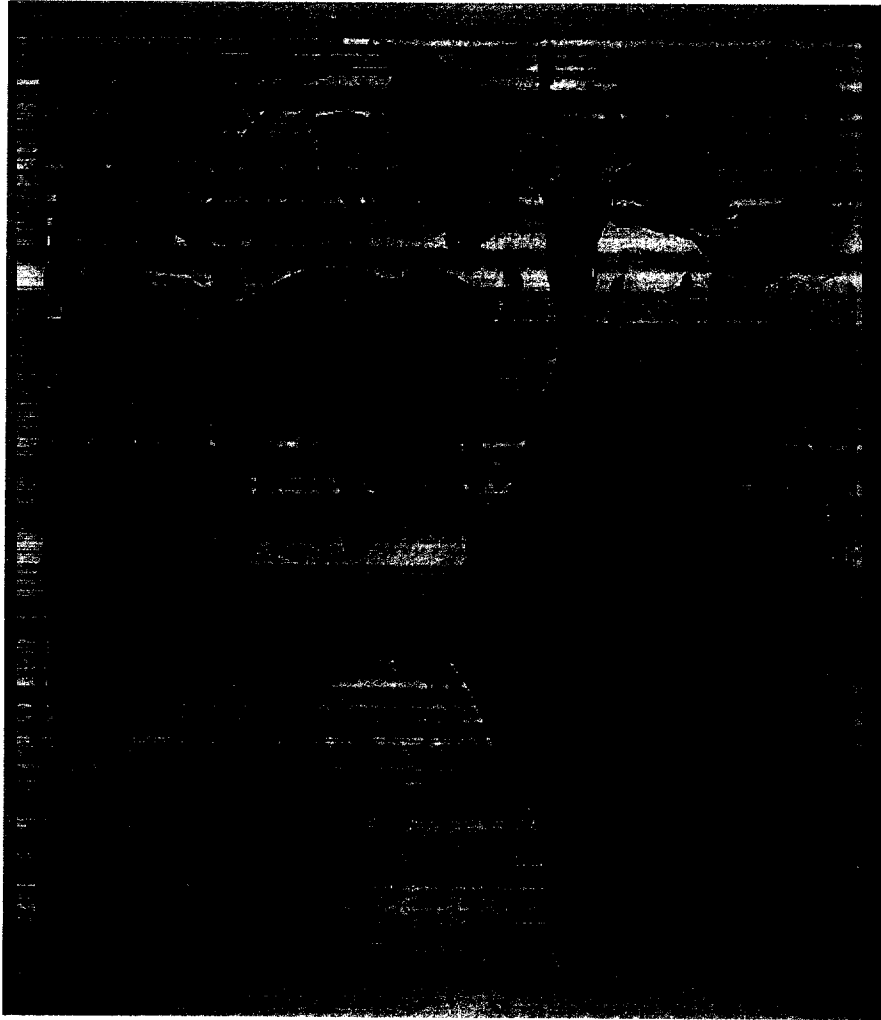


Figure 16. Jack Humphrey, *Mexican Market Scene*, c. 1938-1941, monoprint on wove paper, 38.5 cm x 33.7 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

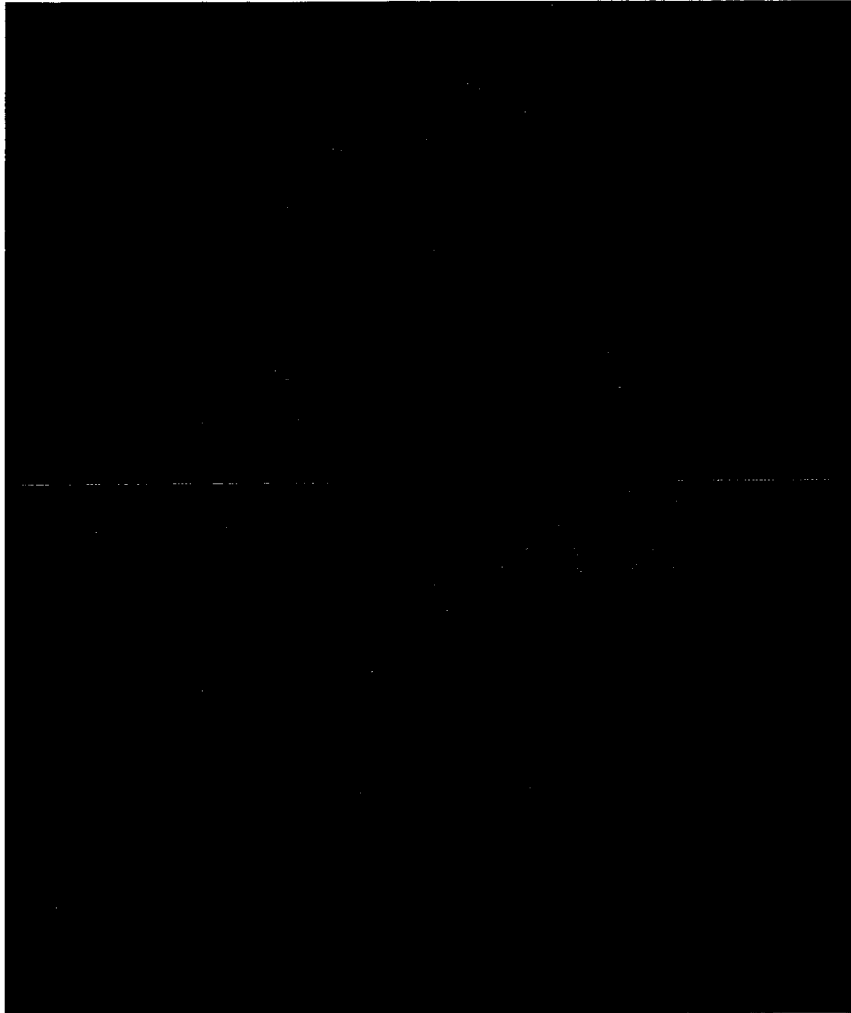


Figure 17. Elizabeth Lovitt Cann, *Artie*, 1941, oil on canvas, 40.7 cm x 33.1 cm. Owens Art Gallery.

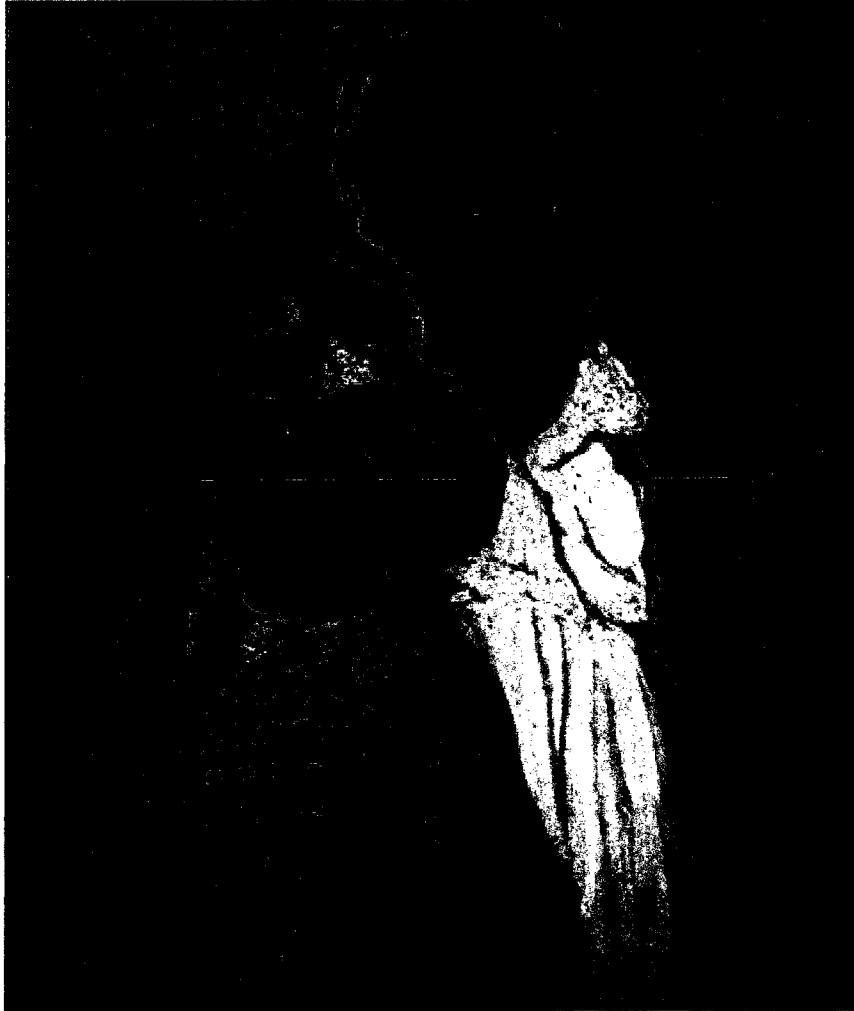


Figure 18. Marion Bond, *Two Children, Aged Five and Ten*, c.1939, oil on canvas, 65.0 cm x 46.1 cm. Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

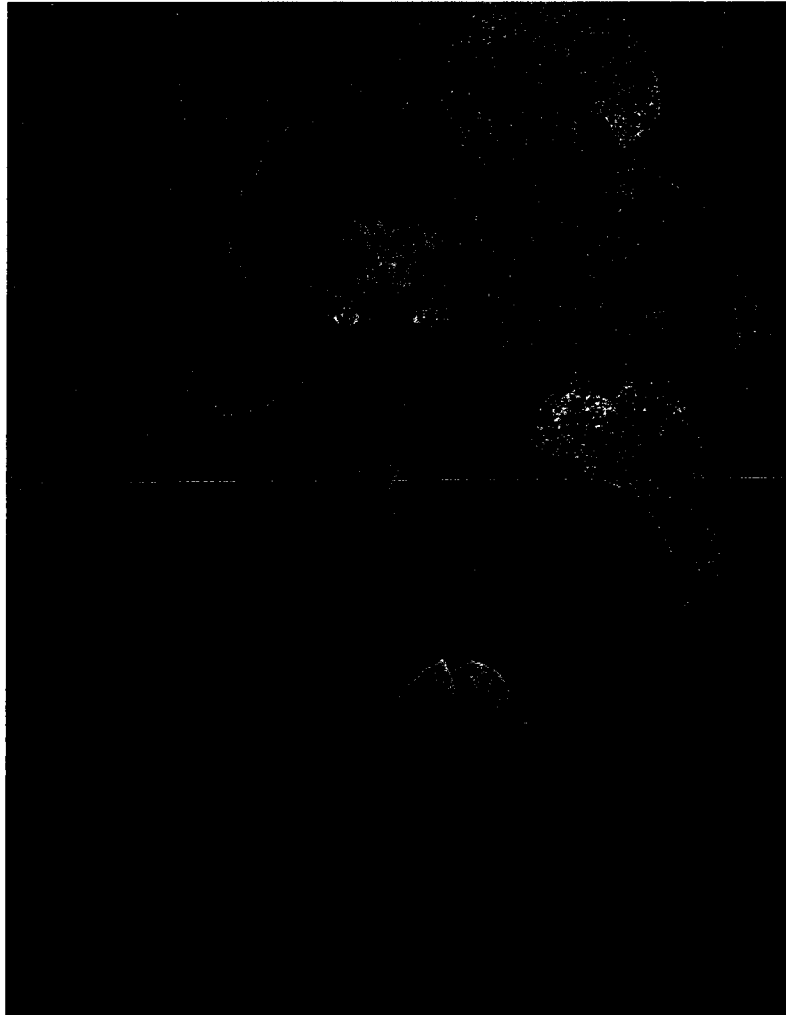


Figure 19. Ted Campbell, *A Portrait*, 1940, oil on canvas, 76.9 cm x 60.8 cm. New Brunswick Museum.

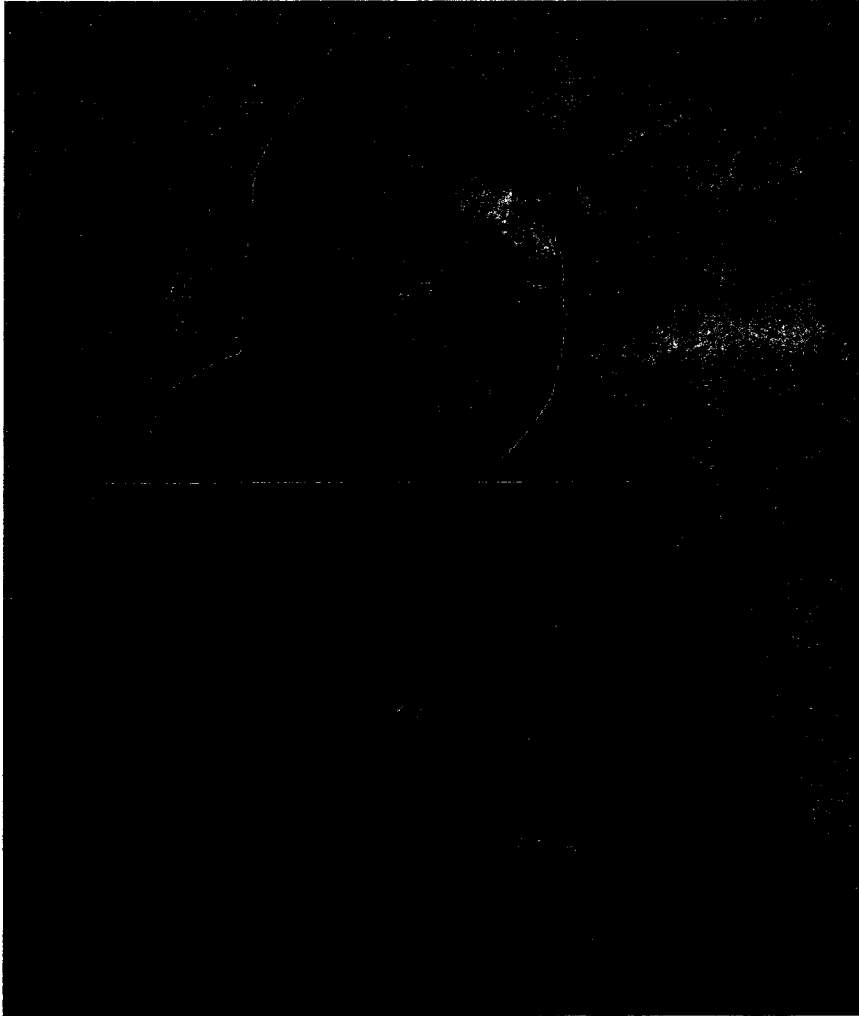


Figure 20. Jack Humphrey, *Edith White*, 1939, oil and tempera on masonite, 60.6 cm x 50.7 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

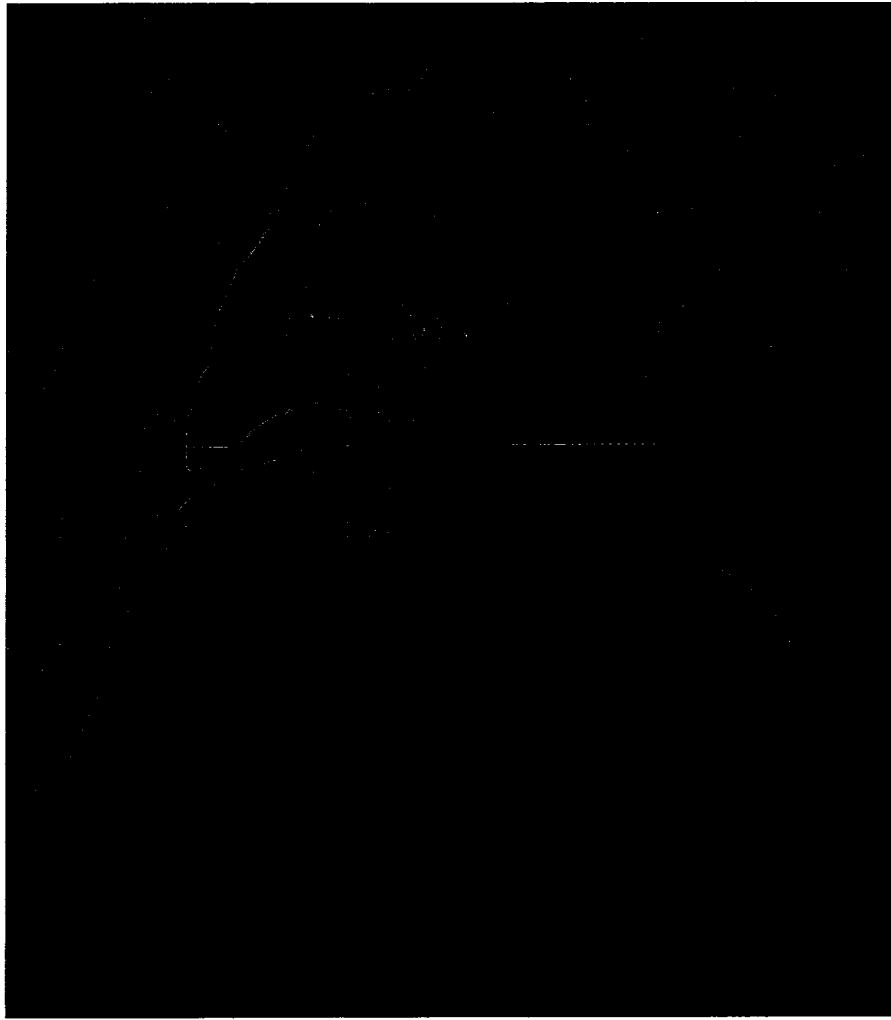


Figure 21. Jack Humphrey, *Edgar Price (Boy in Leather Jacket)*, 1939, 60.8 cm x 50.8 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 22. Miller Gore Brittain, *Longshoremen*, 1940, oil on masonite, 50.8 cm x 63.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

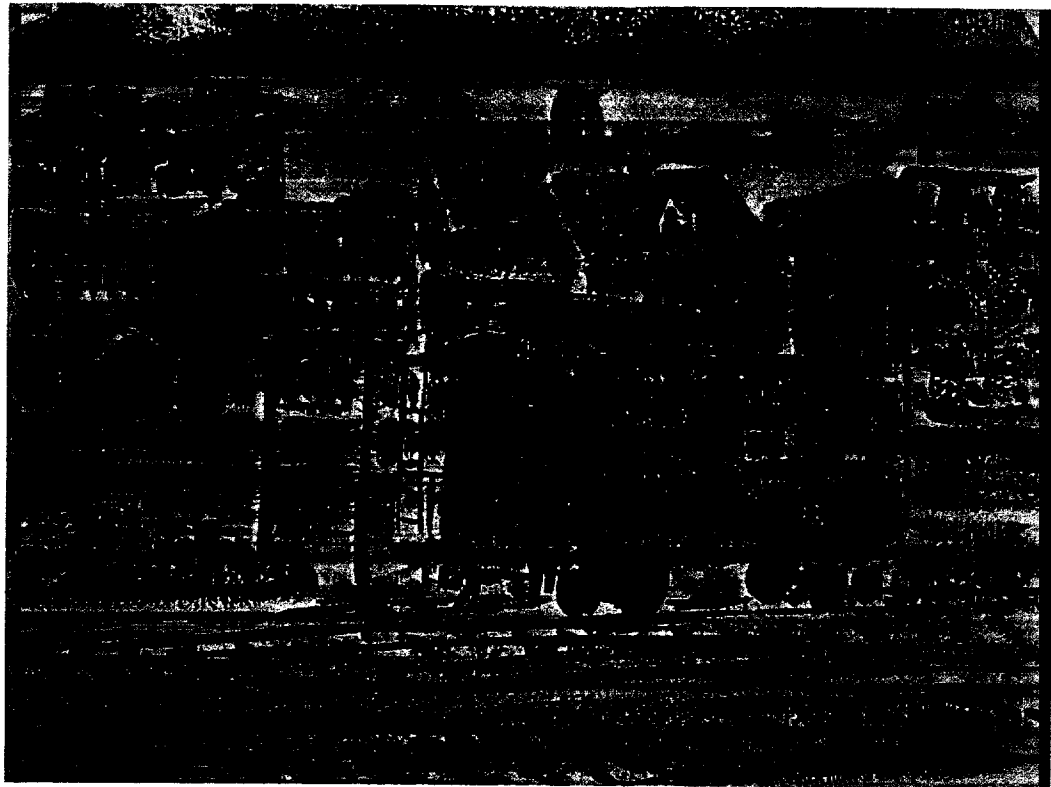


Figure 23. John Bishop, *Caboose*, 1936, watercolour on wove paper, 28.4 cm x 37.6 cm.
New Brunswick Museum.

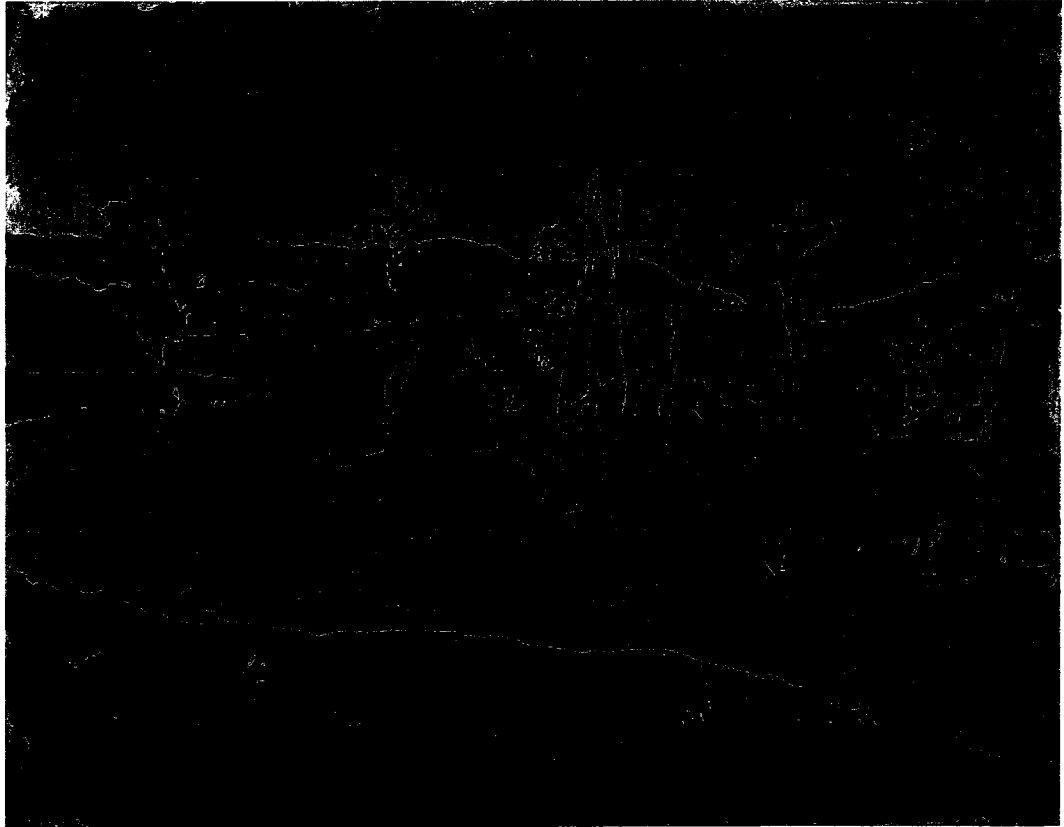


Figure 24. John Bishop, *Spring Freshet*, 1942, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 40.7 cm x 50.8 cm. New Brunswick Museum.



Figure 25. John Bishop, *Site of Fort La Tour*, 1938, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 26.7 cm x 38.3 cm. New Brunswick Museum.

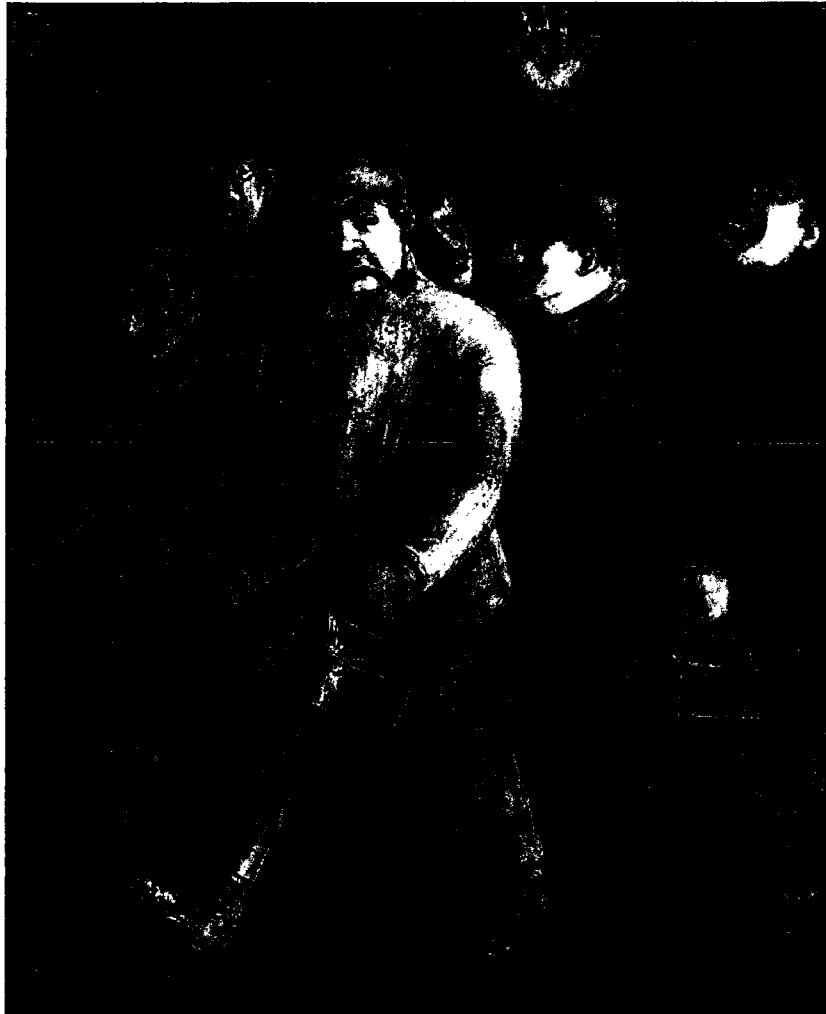


Figure 26. Miller Gore Brittain, *Longshoremen Off Work*, 1938, oil on masonite, 56.5 cm x 45.7 cm. New Brunswick Museum.

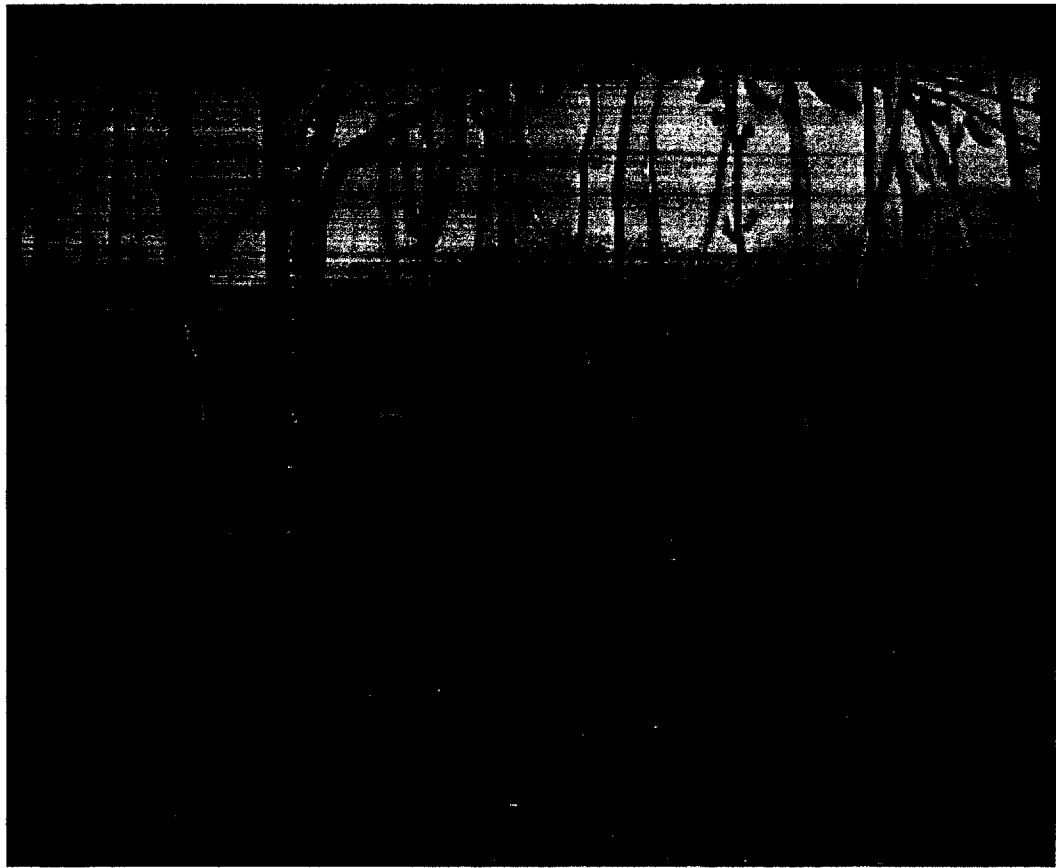


Figure 27. Marion Bond, *Brooke at the Dingle in Winter, Halifax, N.S.*, c.1937, oil on canvas, 51.2 cm x 61.2 cm. Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.



Figure 28. Ted Campbell, *New River Farm*, 1941, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 38.6 cm x 55.7 cm. New Brunswick Museum.

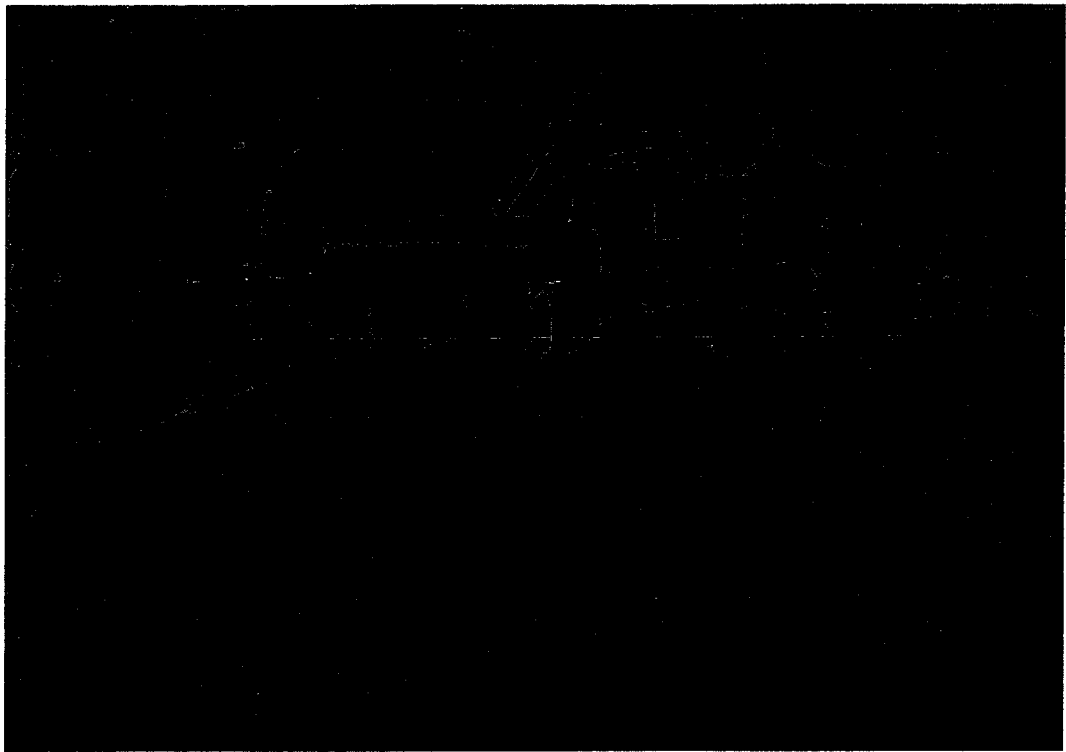


Figure 29. Ted Campbell, *West Saint John*, 1939, watercolour over charcoal on wove paper, 39.1 cm x 57.3 cm. New Brunswick Museum.



Figure 30. Jack Humphrey, *Main Street at Indiantown*, 1940, oil on masonite, 67.5 cm x 91.6 cm. National Gallery of Canada.



Figure 31. Christian McKiel, *View from Seacrest, Pictou*, 1940, oil on canvas, 26.5 x 36.8 cm. Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.



Figure 32. Stanley Royle, *Corfe Castle, Dorset*, c.1937, oil on canvas, 61.2 cm x 50.9 cm. Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

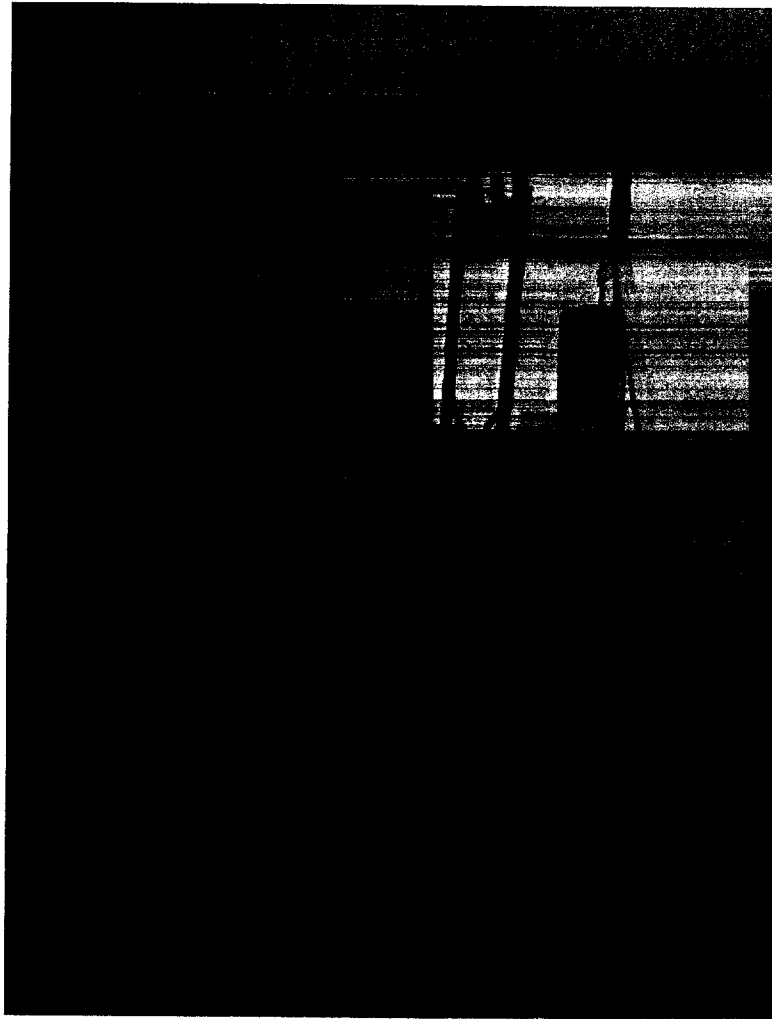


Figure 33. Avery Maynard Shaw, *Mine Site*, 1936, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 50.2 cm x 38.5 cm. New Brunswick Museum.



Figure 34. Avery Maynard Shaw, *Landscape with Farm Buildings*, 1937, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 38.8 cm x 56.9 cm. New Brunswick Museum.



Figure 35. Avery Maynard Shaw, *View of Rocks*, 1937, watercolour over graphite on wove paper, 39 cm x 56.5 cm. New Brunswick Museum.



Figure 36. Ruth Starr, *The Picnic*, 1937, oil on beaverboard, 54 cm x 60.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada.

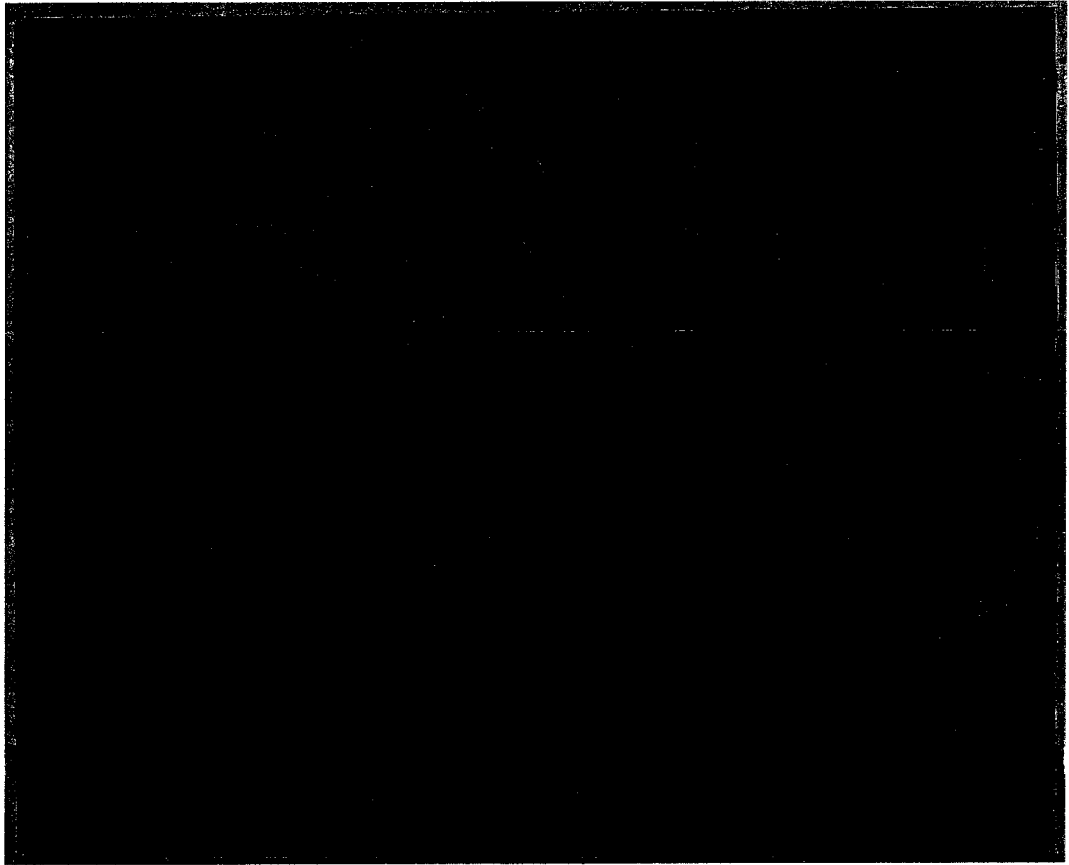


Figure 37. Ruth Wainwright, *Drying Nets*, 1940, oil on canvas, 63.5 cm x 76.4 cm.
Owens Art Gallery.



Figure 38. Edith A. Smith, *Ramparts of the Sea*, c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.



Figure 39. Margaret C. Hibbert, -- and *Points West*, c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.



Figure 40. Leon Zwering, *Edith*, c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.

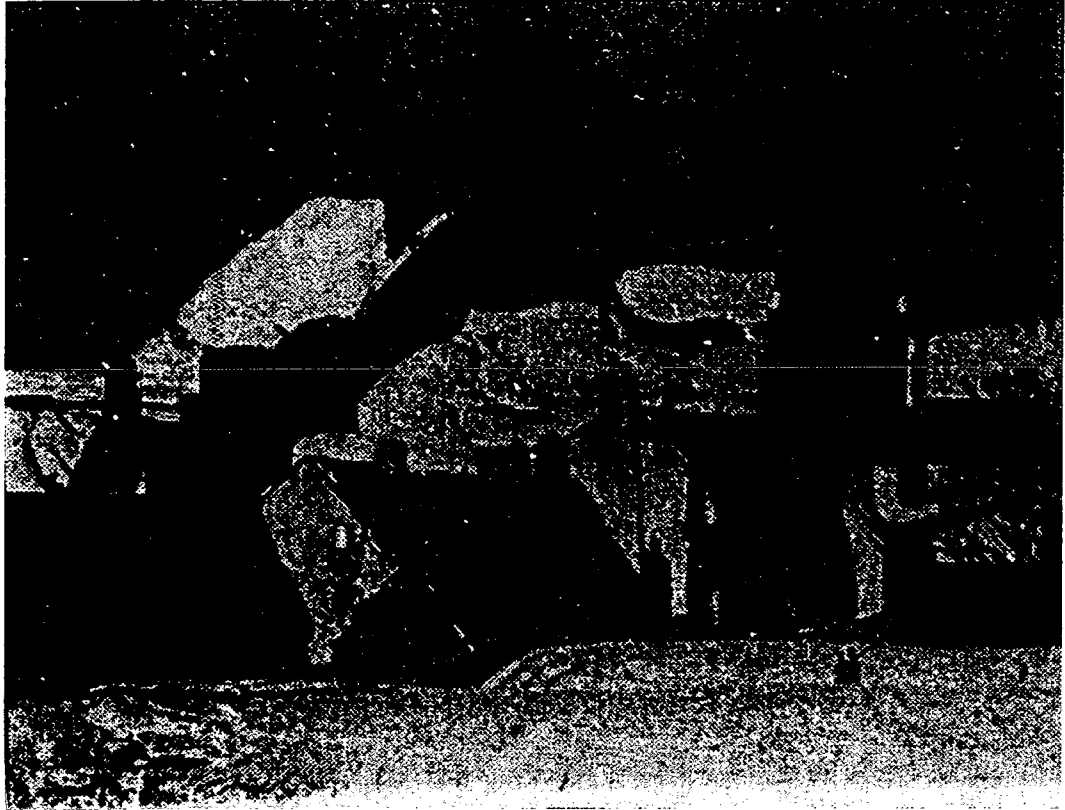


Figure 41. Stanley Royle, *Moonlight on Snow, Corfe Castle, Derbyshire* c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.

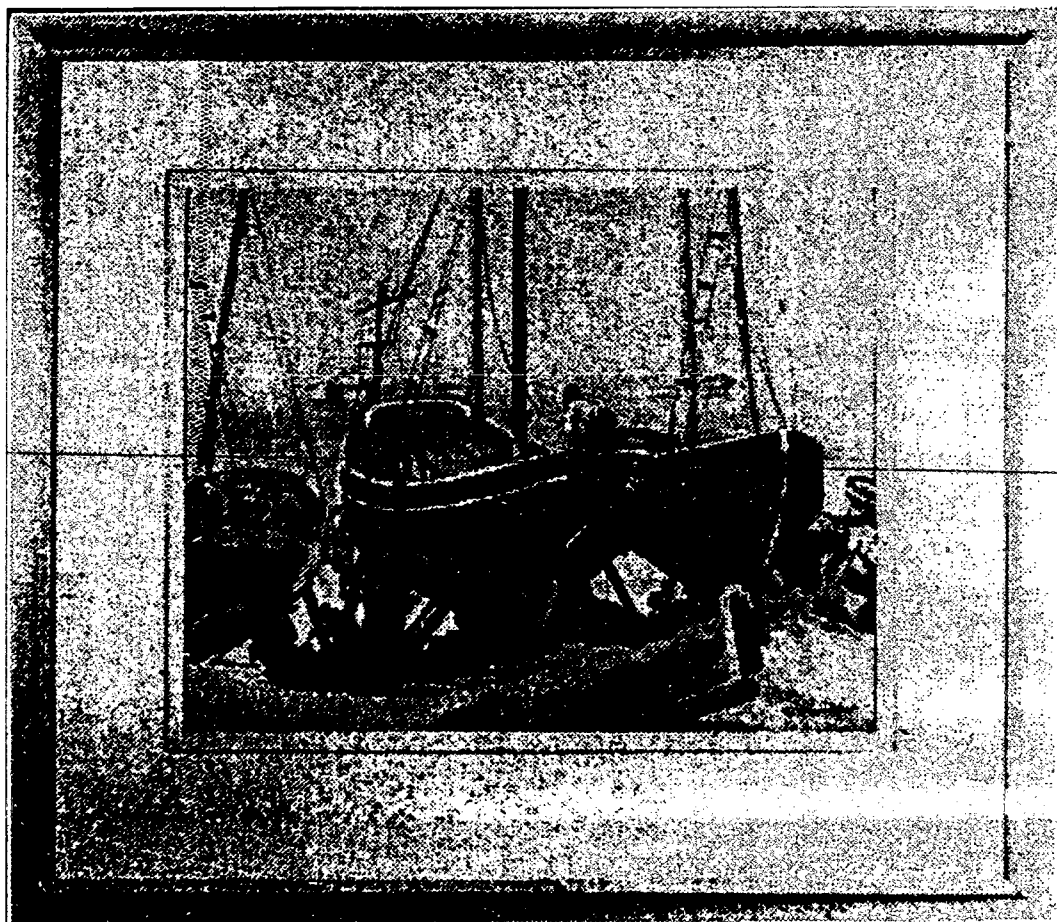


Figure 42. Ruth Salter Wainwright, *Boats at Ingonish* c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.



Figure 43. Mabel K. Day, *Salmon River*, c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.



Figure 44. LeRoy Zwicker, *Brodder Keeler*, c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.



Figure 45. Julia T. Crawford, *The Lily*, c. 1939, oil on canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces* exhibition catalogue, 1939-40.

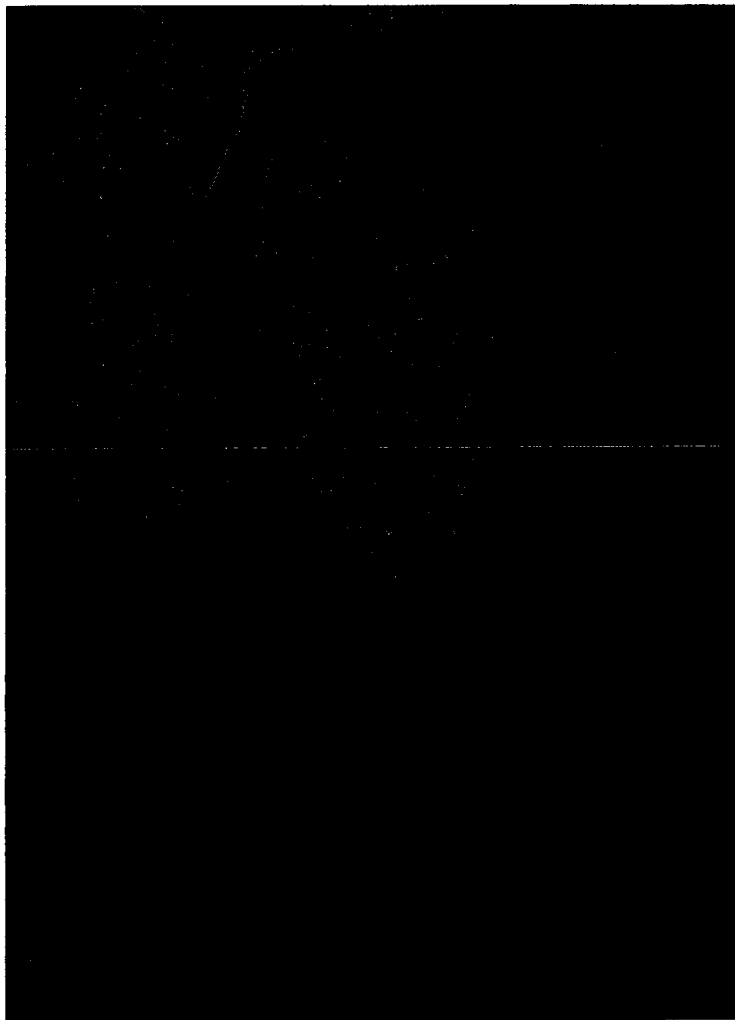


Figure 46. Leon Zwerling, *Portrait of a Girl Sitting*, c. 1942, oil no canvas. Dimensions and collection unknown. Reproduced in "Coast to Coast in Art," *Maritime Art Magazine* 3.3 (February-March, 1943): 92.



Figure 47. Corner of Acadia Art room during exhibition of *Paintings by Artists of the Maritime Provinces*. Reproduced in "Coast to Coast in Art," *Maritime Art Magazine* 2.3 (February-March, 1942): 102.

