Images of Canada: Canadian Bank Notes

by Laura Millard

"The nature of our government, our bilingual heritage and the diversity of Canada's geography and wildlife are emphasized by the portraits, legends, landscapes, birds and national symbols which appear on every bank note."

This quotation from the display text in the "Paper Purses" exhibition at the Currency Museum in Ottawa states that aspects of our 'nature' as Canadians are emphasized through the appearance of our bank notes and suggests that every note provides a cryptic combination of elements which signify 'Canada.' The text goes on to say, "Bank notes are worth getting to know better - not only because of their value but because of the fascinating secrets they have to tell." The key for unlocking these secrets, however, is not provided by official texts.

Just as our nature as Canadians apparently 'appears' to us on our bank notes, the bank note imagery itself seems to 'appear' through a conjuring act which is unfettered by accompanying explanations. The routes taken which lead to the specific images selected are not marked. The official literature does not discuss the process through which it is decided how Canada is portrayed, but states simply that Canada is portrayed. Clues to the nature of this portrayal, to the identity of this Canada, spring from the hope that a picture is indeed worth a thousand words and that an analysis of the Bank of Canada's bank note imagery from its first issue to the present will provide these clues.

The history of the Bank of Canada's control over note design begins in 1935 when it struggled for sole right to issue notes. Provincial governments and chartered banks had previously issued their own. The issue then, as now, was security and control and the newly founded Bank claimed to be better able to control counterfeiting. It set out to improve printing technology so that increasingly intricate designs could be issued to ensure its claim. The Bank of Canada pursues this endeavour to this day. Unlike the tradition of American paper currency which has not deviated from its "green-back," Canadian bank notes have undergone numerous design and imagery changes.

Through a self-propelled flurry of continuing improvement, set in motion by the initial rush to prove itself to eager provincial governments and banks, the Bank of Canada now claims to have arrived at the forefront of currency design. A line is devoted to each press release to the fact that counterfeiting is not a problem in Canada, nor has it been for years. Regardless, the Bank of Canada maintains a program of deterring counterfeiting.

The pursuit of the technologically more advanced note is the rationale behind the almost constant changes and plans to change our bank note design. An example of this can be seen in the creation of the new optical security device (OSD). According to a Bank of Canada press release of 1989, "Canadians can be justly proud of this technological breakthrough, which puts Canadian notes a good step ahead of advanced copying and printing techniques. Canada does not have a counterfeiting problem and the OSD will help to make sure it stays that way."

What "fascinating secret" might this aspect of bank note design tell us? The preoccupation it...
suggests with security, control and the law, is met with the relentless pursuit of a technology that will ensure the maintenance of that preoccupation, in spite of the fact that there are no real threats or enemies to protect against. Compare this with the situation in the United States which have, according to the Currency Museum’s employees, the most counterfeited currency in the world, and yet employ design technology equivalent to what ours was in 1935. Perhaps the American government is just less inclined to interrupt the cash flow of its spirited entrepreneurs, but more certainly it shows that country’s own preoccupation with its history and the tradition of its ‘greenback.’

Beginning with its first issue in 1935, which was issued in separate French and English versions, the images presented on both versions were as follows:

$0.03 bill: ‘Harvest allegory: Seated female with agricultural products.’
$0.06 bill: ‘Electric Power allegory: Seated male with symbols of electricity.’
$0.09 bill: ‘Transportation allegory: Mercury with ships, trains and planes.’
$0.10 bill: ‘Tallow allegory: Kneeling male exhibiting the produce of the field to the Spirit of Agriculture.’
$0.20 bill: ‘Modern Inventions allegory: Seated female with symbols of radio broadcasting.’
$0.50 bill: ‘Commerce and Industry allegory: Seated male showing ship to child, harbour scene and blast furnace in background.’

The same images were used on the following 1937 bilingual issue. When I first saw these images I was taken aback by how foreign they appear, slightly European but predominantly American. The promise, the optimism and the reassurance offered by the supernatural beings portrayed are not aspects of the nature of Canada as I understand it. Portrayed in these bank notes is what Galie McGregor, in The Waccaseu Syndrome, Explorations in Canadian Landscape, describes as the American colonist’s experience of the New World environment: “Under the influence of the millennial expectations of the 17th century, the early American colonist, borrowing concepts from scriptural explication, tended to interpret the empirical environment predominantly in terms of signs or types of supernatural events.” Through this association, “the entire world becomes charged with cosmic significance and every human life was seen as part of a cosmic conflict between the forces of Good and Evil.”

The landscapes in these images have been won over by Good. The landscape is set in the distance and poses no threat, only the promise of space fully inhabitable and hospitable. It is almost
Chippoke Na Gomi

by Mishia

It is raining sand and dirt. It gathered in trucks and flows around its feet, ruffling its shoes and its gray socks and the bag of his shoes. The red brick of the station platform split as he heads forward to catch each of its connections.

He leather bags he at his feet like two black lunches. He grab his collar and drags them hiking across the gritty floor.

He brown, training with the luggage. It grows heavier with every mile.

He focuses on a shadow etched against the wall. It is shadow of a missing person bent over in thought.

He woman sitting in a café, talking on a cell phone. She is an elegantly woman in a soft pale coverall. The coverall has a flame colored leather patch on the shoulder. She is leaning forward with her elbows on her knees. Her head is down and her hands are lightly held in interlocking fingers. When she shakes it she is all flat again, like a shadow.

She sits the bags over the bench and sits down. She brushes the dirt of her coat and starts at her.

She slides through an opening in the cloud.

Small strings of dust float from the ceiling toward the floor.

He sneezes.

A brown bottle bounces across the tile floor. He turns and sees a tattered duster ragged out of the door. From him rags unraveled and fell into the debris of the station. The dusty bag rises up a humble dirt dusting under the bench.

A huge column of purple and orange flame is rising,ropy, doubled spaced, and spread out to fill one side of the train window. That station master crouches into the receiver. He cooks his head expectantly, listening someone crying on the other end of the line.

He looks at the shadow woman. Her coverall is stained at the knees and chisel with thick white ash. She is wearing scorched bishops with yellow flame emblem on them.

Carbonized iron plates and burn turns and broken dusts of feet along the ground.

He can’t ever remember being this tired. Or this hungry. He hopes to watch himself in her eyes.

"In Japan they have trains that travel 120 miles an hour and this one is 120 minutes late.

He moves his head slowly, then turns her head toward him. She has the deep complexity and features of an Ano, but she decides he is American Indian.

"Were you in Japan?" Her voice is so soft, it makes his throat itch.

"That's right."

"He coughs into his white gloves." I've been studying Japanese dust."

The man has a brown beard and bags, he can't help but notice that they are inflamed and sticky at the corners. A little white mother takes them.

He looks at the shadow woman. "I'm a kiconoic."

An inch thick of gray ash covers everything. As he tries to write her a letter, the brush draws into the ash falling on the rice paper.

She chews the inside of her cheek. She looks back and a stranger influence on her cheeks alarm him.

"He looks at his white knuckles."

She scrunches up her nose. "Konomoto. The word breaks in her mouth, as if she spoke around grains of sand. Her hair, Radius Style, is equally regular and eroded and the distinctive, the gene-branching and the herefore, unknown. As editors of this modest first edition, we look forward to this new forum. We thank our steady readers for their ongoing support in the past, and we welcome all new readers to these pages!

Sincerely,
Two Poems
by John Donlan

The Me

I'm not hip here.
I can never get enough credentials?
Don't take yourself for too real.
Easier to carry a frog than a snake.
All those looking for a short-term relationship
raise your right paw.
Eyeshine, ardent talk, shimmer and pop self, bubbleshell between
nature and nature.
Flying out of our skins, we
sparks rush into the gap left by John Clare.
TV vampire romance queen reclines
on bourgeois icon, time-sharpening memory, will, sense
for the effect of simultaneity, life-based thinking...
Forget who's watching
secret raccoons wash and eat.
Repeat No Voice, No voice, walking through
unimproved land.

Just Do It

This was Zhou En-Lai's cot, with its worn blanket -
nearly all he owned.
He was part of the new style, the new
attitude they call reckoning with death.
He aimed to violate some principles,
firmly held beliefs that look so different from the back.
Let's empty just one day of content, let's
dump its time out and waste it.
Martha I'm mourning,
painting the sacred book black.
Even grief has its utility,
plastic, motion, raging at the shapes
imposed on it by its handler.
They burn us, and we burn back, until the bars
between the crowed and the caged crazy animal
are gone at last. Symbols of old order
go next, and then the long forging begins
again, those chains of chilling generations.
Some of us by the stove were missed out. Water beads
racing over the iron: where do they go?

The Photographer Listens
As the Shutter Closes
by Serge Mongrain
translated by Judith Cowan

Shed by the intestines of the buffalo
the Altamira fresco
sculpts itself into the rocky conformation
the destiny of the walls
and the movement of the stones.
This which is possible to the eyes
this anarchy of the hands
forges in the very iron itself
its alliance with the flames.

The silence
there is the blonde stretched out on the bench
who listens, inviting absence
there is the frame of bone, pulling muscles
there is the weight of the eyelash.
In the growing silence
everything unfolds as foreseen
everything fails for the flight of the fly
everything cries out as if its throat
had been cut by song.
In these silences of ecstasy
an everydayman sees to everything
a week is worth a week is worth
a century as weightless as an eternal beginning.

But I lint from that table at my pants brushing,
thin stacks of skin completion, off the edge slipping,
where you; on the door lentils chewing, staring (at?
me?) with leguminous eyes; Ah's all swarmed in a
cloud-of-hate, different brimmings over the same
sweaty hands' holding-it-on (but I went from that
crible in my grave rushing, laughless as I scraped
my chair and my face brushed off, just a grin under
my back pockets' inversion) So I, toward you, took a
step sloped, swallowed my eating, tried for my
tongue's conversion...
Riddle in Silk
by Yves Troendle

A young woman parts the crimson velvet drapes and tiptoes into an ornate but deserted drawing room. Except that now she's standing in it. She looks around, slightly German, very French. A maid's lacry cap is perched atop her wave of dark head. Silk stockings give a magical sheen to her shapely legs. Fanned, or at least it seems so. The story is mostly about these stockings, though they're artfully introduced as incidental. They were sent by a pilot, Mike Traynor, from Cuba to this place, in the palatial home of Ralph Vallerie, a deep-voiced, silver-haired man who radiates wealth and distinction. Enable a cell, to pluck kitten, diamond burling from the certainty, flesh seems a thorn. Vallen, you see, had to do a long-range photography in the less air lines above the Caribbean. Mike had a top-notch collection of sky maps. Down the corridors of caring, doors are numberless. While scurrying down the marble hallway, the maid glimpsed a man's swarthy face in a painting mirror. Or rim. mir ro x im...

Now she's haunted by the fear that he glimpsed her own.

You mean a plane flying over enemy territory could map their location and beam images back to headquarters? A deadly quiet, except for the maid's frightened panting, and rain hissing on the windows. You could almost hold the room in your hands, like a box filled with magic light. The pretty maid's lips are vivid scarlet, her face dead-white, chalky with terror. There's a telephone on a carved oak desk. The desk, with gilt griffins feet, and hiding tiny compartments, comes from successively older mansions (counting backwards), the telephone comes from a factory and is a common sight, and strikes lightning, just as a needle does electrical fire. Nanette, the maid, walks briskly up to it. Exactly! And Mike did it! He promised to send the secret code in code, but all I ever got was... silk stockings from Havana! Nanette unbreaks it furiously. After drinking scotch, the men in shirts. Lathering his hand down spiked, slag jasmine, grip the balustrade. "But I don't want to lose a gem of a location!"

Before but Mike could send an explanation under separate cover, he was down somewhere over the Gulf—killed by agents of a war-like police. The last postcard he sent showed an orange sky, and sounded like a distant hooter. Images flicker, memory shaves, departed by the light of his skirt. So it was up to Vallen to figure out how the secret message was encoded in the silk. He walked up cold marble steps, leaves imprinting the dew. Hold still so I can scribble all over you. He asked his niece, the gorgeous Dorthea, to wear them.

The perfect place to hide an invisible message— for all eyes to see! First of many paradoxes. All games of desire. We gaze her into life. Her whisper is barely audible. And nobody replies. The various brain features on the telephone reflect the electric bulbs that light the room. And silver lightning shudders in the polish of the oak desk-top. Nanette spins around and clutches an edge of the desk, her knucklesturning white, but see nothing.

And, standing by this very desk, Dorthea Vallen will soon be telling Scott Adley, private investigator, that after drinking down some strangely bitter-tasting scotch in her room that evening, she'd fainted. Slink, silk, cologne, kim, red dot, chrysanthemum. Now all Nanette can hear is the pulse of blood in her ear. Dorthea recovers her senses—and legs, upright with a gash! Nanette glances behind the desk, and gasps! Someone has removed Dorthea's slippers— and her garters were unknotted! The telephone wire is slashed! Those stockings meant the difference between peace and war on the Continent! Then the room is plunged into utter darkness.

Nanette can only see vague gray and yellow shapes swimming in the black. Darkness apprehends her. This excites the rest of her. Looking, after all, requires a depth-sound in which to focus; darkness flows right in, pressing on her beating chest. Leaping into the room, the intruder will Suzanne the muzzle of his Little Depot. Out of the door, a silverblue leap at Nanette. Everyone will record surprise— Ralph Vallen by gripping the carved crest of his wholesale cigar. Crouched in the corner, by toasting back her honey locks, her eyes sparkling ice. Her skin is like moonlight. One hand is in huge black velvet gloves sprinkled with stars. And clouds are out walking without doors. Go now, king one, down assert like knowledge cry. Except, that is, the private eye, at whom the client will be paying! I will need to stockings, Madame. Remember dean!" "Do as she says," Dorthea," Ralph Vallen will cooly advise. Taste decoration, label costly ash. She released enormous florid fans, their heads in milk. Slowly, with her face flushing, Dorthea will lift the hem of her silver evening gown to her knees.

She will hold the gown bunched like silver froth against her thigh while the other hand vanishes to deftly unknot the garter. Rain ripping down the tall windows will hammer its patterns across the room on stuttering lightning. The manor is on a hill. The hill is in America. In Europe, soldiers are dying. Ralph Vallen will cough, and then gaze at the intruder. This interlude, a swarthy man in a dark suit, who seems to block light, will glaze apprehensively from Brickley to Dorthea's leg and back. Brickley will be resting at the writing desk— exactly where Nanette stands now as her red mouth fills open to utter a scream. Dorthea's leg is caught in a sightless web, doubled, eyes closed, ciphers. Sapphires you orion peel her fingers wing, memory, the ruby chamber, shin. There will be faint sound of moist cracking and she feels the stocking down. A hand gloved in cool leather clamps across the maid's open mouth.

It was, or it seemed to be, a perfect natural sequence of events. The windows were unbroken. A man passed within six feet, but they did not see him. Suddenly the figure dissolving rushed toward them. The man is transformed into a single cloud, a single cloud. Without a cloud, Vallen will spatter: "B- but aren't you going to chase him?"

But the figure hurrying through the rain for the rope hanging from the garden wall will be going nowhere. Paradox. What do you mean? Lay it on the table! Crotchety bell-melons dropping wooden dreams. Hail! I don't get you. Resolution. Well, when Nanette found her mistress lying unconscious on her bed, she knew the thief was lurking somewhere in the house. And I don't remember Della Slade perched on Perry's desk for the wrap-up? Her long legs crossed. The sense life makes when viewed from the right keyhole? So the plucky girl quickly perched off Miss Vallen's silk hose, and exchanged stockings with her so as to fill a soap pulp. Unfortunately... The body leaps in the murderous arums, and falls in a death below the desk. It will be Nanette's body, and the Vallen will gasp.

But that's a dick's job: produce the body, and expose the random as inevitable, after all. While the end, roses converge. He'll realize soon enough that the prize he thinks he's catching is still here, on the cold limbs on the very maid she knew! An overturned chair is set neatly back on its legs. Ask the

ann, glass departure, spoon. Wait— isn't that an infra-red lamp on the desk? The dangling telephone receiver is dropped back into its cradle. Why, look at this weird purple ball—yes it is! Turn out the light! With a dry snap, the ceiling lights blaze again, revealing a deserted room.

Except for the murder's gloved hand, just now pulling the door shut. And of course Nanette's limp body. She lies there like an open book. One arm is thrown above her head. The conception. Under the infra-red lamp's ghastly glow, her legs will instantly be covered with brilliant diagrams of gypsys, arranged in sinuous rows.

All those years, and now this ring. The sea churning and churning in dark harps. Break the body into webs that map out whole continents. It's whole continents. The carved oak and brass clock on the mantel indicates the time. Late train,检验blue, such is what is, and anyway, faces glass told. Exactly 11:17.

Minutes later, hands and anxious voices can be heard coming down the hallway. Gazing at the legs while Brickley holds the lamp high, each person will be aware of a shock of recognition. The lenses of Ralph Vallerie's glasses will reflect the gypsys in bright inverted miniature. Someone just outside cilia, cilia, "Pray to God we're not too late!" as the brass knobs turn.

vi

Rose World
by Edward Mycue

(fo Donna M. Lise, inspired by her own story, STUCK, published in the 10th edition of the Sunday San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle "Image" magazine, pp.20-23.)

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The Spacious Chambers of Her Heart
by Diane Schoemperlen

"The heart, in the adult, measures five inches in length, three inches and a half in breadth in the broadest part, and two inches and a half in thickness. The prevalent weight, in the male, varies from ten to twelve ounces; in the female, from eight to ten: its proportions to the body being as 1 to 169 in males; 1 to 149 in females. The heart continues increasing in weight, and also in length, breadth, and thickness, up to an advanced period in life."

—GRAY'S ANATOMY, 1901 EDITION

Evangeline Clark loved four things, and four things only. Her heart having only four chambers, spacious though they might be, she had limited herself to loving four things.

First there was music.

Secondly there was colour.

"The Right Ventricles are triangular in form, and extends from the right auricle to near the apex of the heart. Its anterior or upper surface is rounded and convex, and forms the larger part of the front of the heart. The walls of the right ventricle are thinner than those of the left, the proportion between them being as 1 to 3. The cavity equals in size that of the left ventricle, and is capable of containing about three fluid ounces."

This love she was learning from and sharing with her husband, who was a painter, a very good painter whose vivid larger-than-life canvases were shown all over the continent. "Brilliant" and "electric" were the words most often applied by the critics, used indiscriminately, it seemed, to describe both the man himself and his provocative and penetrating use of colour. Her husband was indeed a brilliant and electric man, a volatile over-stimulated genius who was always painting in his studio or wanting to. Evangeline quickly discovered that most of the manoeuvres and machinations of daily life struck him as mundane, if not a downright waste of time. From him she learned that all things, animal, vegetable or mineral (also plastic, polyester or nylon), were intrinsically important not because of function but because of colour, which is all the naked eye naturally cares about anyway. He spent a lot of time mixing colours, trying to create the true green of grass, the true blue of sky, the true red of blood, and the true ineffable colour of the sun, which was not yellow at all, though we had all been tricked from an early age into believing that it was. This search for the true colour of everything was, he said, like trying to create life in a test tube. But what is life, what is truth, what is the colour of your breath in the summer, what is the true colour of flesh?

Although she had no artistic talent of her own and so had never learned a painting or anything, Evangeline took great pains to keep her house (his house, her house) full of colour. She had a stained glass window installed in the bathroom so that her husband's naked body (also his naked eye) would glow like an illuminated prism in the shower. This calmed him down considerably because any form of clarity (plain glass, cellulose, Saran Wrap, or water) tormented him unbearably because it was unattainable. She was careful to dress herself in bright colours, yellow scarf, green blouse, blue skirt, red ties, purple shoes, because clearly her husband adored her when she appeared before him like this, with the bands of colour encircling her body like a rainbow or pretty ribbons, like wondrous bandages from her head to her toes.

Every morning her husband sat in his blue shirt at the breakfast table, surrounded by the still life she had so carefully arranged: the yellow egg yolks, the red jam, the brown coffee, the purple lilacs on the window sill, his red lips, white teeth, chewing and smiling. And while he admired the orange juice shot through with sunlight, Evangeline was left breathless and intoxicated with the pleasure of her own power. Of course she didn't put it to her husband that way. Instead she said she was smiling because she was happy.
Thirdly there was language.

"The Left Auricle is rather smaller than the right; its walls thicker, measuring about one and a half; it consists, like the right, of two parts, a principal cavity, or sinus, and an appendage auricularis."

This love had come to her of its own volition, right out of the blue (long before she'd married and discovered the meanings and messages of sky blue, the wild blue yonder or any other mutation of blue). This love she was sharing with and passing on (she hoped) to her son who was just learning to read. He followed her around asking, "What does this say? What does that say?" For every room, when you looked at it that way, was filled with the printed word. Besides all the books which covered every flat surface, there were coral boxes, labelled casseters, shampoo bottles, toothpaste tubes, postcards and notes to herself stuck on the fridge, all of these covered with inscriptions, ingredients, reminders, names and warnings. He came home from school with little books which she read to him every evening after supper. She nearly wept with happiness when he learned to pick out words by himself: "the, you, go, no, pop, hop, hop on, pop." She printed out lists of rhyming words like: "book-book, look-look, rook-rook, shock-shock", and they hugged each other with excitement. When she thought aloud about all the words in the language, she had to marvel at the miracle of anyone ever learning to read in the first place. They were all geniuses, when you looked at it that way.

Although she had no literary talent of her own and so had never written a story, a novel, not even a poem, Evangeline kept the whole house full of books. There were bookcases in every single room, even the bathroom. The meals were slapdash and the house was a colourless mess, because when Evangeline was not changing the music or arranging the new purple and turquoise jewel-tone towels in the bathroom, she was reading. She had a special little bookstand which she carried around the house with her so she could read while she cooked, while she ate, while she did the dishes, vacuumed, washed the colourful floors. Often she went to bed with a headache (and so had to say to her husband, 'No tonight dear, I've got a headache') caused no doubt by eyestrain. But she preferred to think, in her more whimsical moments, that it was caused by the weight of all the words she'd jamméd into her head, all of them in there whirling and twirling, doing magic tricks and juggling for position. Some words were better than others, she knew that by now. All words were not created equal. All words were more than the sum of their parts. A word like "wilder" was better than either "with" or "her", for instance. "Holocaust" was better than either "soul" or "fire". "Synergy" was better than either "sin" or "energy". Something was better than nothing. Her over-stimulated husband usually granted and supposed Aspirin or therapy but she said she'd rather suffer.

Finally there was light.

"The Left Ventricle is longer and more conical in shape than the right ventricle, and on transverse section its cavity presents an oval or nearly circular outline. It forms a small part of the posterior surface of the heart, and a considerable part of its posterior surface. It also forms the apex of the heart by its projection beyond the right ventricle. Its walls are much thicker than those on the right side, the proportion being as 3 to 1. They are thickest opposite the widest part of the ventricle, becoming gradually thinner toward the base, and also toward the apex, which is the thinnest part."

This was her secret love which she had learned from and shared only with herself. For years she had carried it on privately, in love with the muffled electric light of the bedroom in the morning when it had snowed overnight. Or the amiable pink light of a clear winter morning (which she refused to believe, as her husband warned, was really a result of all the pollution in the dying air). Or the fast-fading light of a mid-winter late afternoon which made her legs go weak with lassitude. Or the garish glare of a Hamburger sunlit, a cliché certainly, but thrilling and unforgettable nonetheless. Or the spring sunbeams on the kitchen floor which her son, as a baby, had liked to sit and smile in like a little Buddha on the green linoleum.

All of these explicit and unconditional light she had recorded, not with her naked eye, but rather with her naked heart which, she imagined, operated much like a primitive camera, a pinhole in the centre through which the illuminated images were funnelled and then amplified.

As she grew older, her heart was growing heavier (also longer, wider, thicker) and this spot of light was growing too. This process did not require talent. It only required patience and the imponderable passage of time. Right now, she figured, it was about the size of a regular incandescent lightbulb, sixty or maybe a hundred watts. Soon it would be the size of a spotlight, a perfectly circular beam of lucidity. It would mature then to a strobe light, rendering all motion robotic and frenetic. From there it would transform itself into a searchlight, its radiant beacon searching out the secret corners of everything. Next it would stop moving altogether and expand smoothly to the size of a floodlight, washing away all colour and confusion within its vast range.

Finally the light of her life would achieve its apex, expanding inexorably and infinitely to illuminate all the spacious chambers of her heart.
The Two Gentle
Ladies from K-Mart
by M.A.C. Farrant

I'm in the basement coffee room at K-Mart, the
downtown store. I came in here looking for cheap dish towels
and the two waitresses in charge of household items told me
to wait in here, in their coffee room, a small dingy room located
somewhere in the basement of the building.

There's some cold pizza in a box on the coffee table and
they suggested that I might like to help myself to some or
make myself some instant coffee if I get thirsty. Then they
went away and locked the door.

I had a look at the pizza but declined a slice. With
curling bits of dry salami sprinkled over its surface it hardly
looked appetizing.

For some reason the K-Mart ladies think I am
wonderful. Every now and then they peek in at me to show
me to the other sales ladies from Home Furnishing and
Lingerie. They point me out to them, smiling, and are
extremely polite and deferential. Then they all giggle together
and agree that I am quite a unique find.

I can't understand why they regard me as some kind
of marvelous jewel they have just discovered or happened
upon, so marvelous they wish to keep me here for their own
private viewing.

Still, they are trying to keep me happy. I can't
deny them that - by telling me that they have an especially
good bargain in dish towels (just for me!) and that they are
arranging the items upstairs, that very minute, sampling them
all together and sticking on their price tags. All marked down
to one cent apiece. A bargain indeed. So I am grateful for
their endeavors on my behalf and hesitate to protest my
capture. Because that is what it is. A capture and
impregnation before my time. Although I have some reason
to believe that the two gentle ladies from K-Mart would not call that it. They
would be offended if I were to suggest it. To them I am merely a
simplistic, interesting specimen they have found to forest away
and marvel at on their coffee break.

All well and good. I hate to disappoint them but my
wife is waiting for me in front of the Bookman on the
corner of Yates and Douglas streets. I told her I wouldn't be
long - just stopping at K-Mart to pick up some dish
towels. I said, and, knowing her, she's still standing there,
out front of the Bank. She will wait all day and longer if I
ask her to and I won't blame her if she doesn't know how to wait
correctly.

That is, without drawing attention to herself.
Anonymous. She will wait far too late on the
sidewalk, for instance, so that she becomes like an island in
the pedestrian flow that people must break apart and steer
around. This will cause her to draw stares of fear and perhaps
even hatred from the passers-by - perhaps even some
dreadful woman because she is slightly off course with her not-
walking properly. The other problem is that she twirls. She's
an expert on twirling, on her heels and bending down.

Sometimes she can manage two, three twirls at once. This
is fine for our background Bar-B-Q's but suicide on a busy
town street.

So I really am worried for her. But what can I do,
captured as I am like some fabulous insect? The K-Mart
ladies seem to regard me as a model house-husband which I
certainly am not. It's just that I like a bargain. It would be all
right if they regarded me as a hip shopper, though, because
there could be some commercial advantage in that. I could
have my picture taken and appear on their advertising flyers
buying dish cloths with my new dish towels. For a small fee, of
course; there's no denying I could use the extra money. But,
no, the K-Mart ladies prefer to keep me for themselves;
a found object, somehow meaning gettmg to their daily work at
the store. Meanwhile I worry about my wife.

There's a small window near the ceiling of the
basement coffee room. By climbing up onto the coffee table
beneath it, I am just able to peer out well enough to see the
church across the street and for the past while I have been
occupying myself by drawing a likeness of this church in the
lined notebook I always carry with me. It's a large church
resembling some three-storied blocks with a stick on top, quite
simple to draw.

When the K-Mart ladies peep in on their next coffee
time they are disappointed that I have not eaten a slice of
their cold pizza so as to accommodate them, because they
really are nice ladies. I suppose I'll have to eat it and eat a piece.
This pleases them so much that I am encouraged to show
them my other crude drawing of the church, torn hastily from
my notebook. They take it solemnly, with tears in their eyes
and seem to study it most appreciatively. What do they see
there, I wonder? But before they have passed they have
handed me a set of bargain dish towels (at no charge),
unlocked the door and waved me farewell. (But keeping the
picture, I might add, for themselves.)

Now that I am free to go and have hurried off in
search of my wife.

I have found her, standing in front of the Bank, too
far from the curb and twirling, as I had feared, drawing angry
stares from the passers-by.

So I have taken her now by the arm and together we
are hurrying up Yates Street. Correctly, on the right side of
the sidewalk because in this life the journey is perilous
enough - what with the chance impersonations that can befall
you at any moment - without adding further misery by
disobeying the rules of the road, as well.

CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES:
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THE NEXT "RAPINDLE LITERARY SUPPLEMENT" WILL APPEAR IN A FUTURE ISSUE OF BORDERLINES MAGAZINE. FOR THE END OF THIS YEAR. IN THE MEANTIME, KEEP A-EYE OUT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF RAMPULP MAGAZINE WHICH WILL FEATURE THE TOPIC OF "CREATIVE MIND-UNDERSTANDING" AVAILABLE AT A NEWSSTAND NEAR YOU IN SEPTEMBER.
demythologized the environment tends simply to become a kind of void that resists all human connection. This is what happens in the Canadian landscape.

What evidence of this void can be found in the Canadian dimension series? Whereas all the previous issue images celebrated the inhabited and benevolent landscape, only half of the 1954 series show any sign of a human presence at all and it is revealing to look at how this human presence is portrayed.

For example, the first $1 bill presents the landscape as a vast expanse under a stormy sky. Cutting through it are telephone poles, a dirt road and a barbed wire fence that recedes in one-point perspective to a distant grain elevator poised on the horizon. A large thunderhead hovers just above the tiny structure. It is a far and rather lonely cry from the Agriculture allegedly seated in her throne surrounded by heaps of produce. The thin threads of transportation (road) and communication (poles) provide little reassurance against the distant storm and vast space.

The $2 bill shows three or four small farm houses and a church clustered in the center of the mid-ground. The distant houses are alone and unreachable. The $1000 image is like the $2 one, showing a few structures in the mid-ground, but here the foreground is greatly reduced and mountain domes on the horizon which almost obscures the sky. The vast landscape again engulfs a few buildings. This image is also in stark contrast to its previous image of the Security allegory. The remaining images of the 1954 series depict landscapes devoid of human presence and of those only the $100 one has a foreground which it seems possible to enter. The other images do not suggest possible passage through them, their foregrounds blocked by rapids, trees or snow. The images on the $5, $10 and $50 bills specifically appear utterly wild and alien. McGregor suggests that, "The real relevance of the wilderness mythos to Canada can be seen only if we pay attention to what its proponents show us unobtrusively, rather than giving too much weight to what they say are doing."

What do the 1954 issue images show us, given that they are to create a dimension that is Canadian? With regard to the portrayal of Canadians within the Canadian landscape, they unquestionably show a great deal of it and a little of us. We stand together while the landscape surrounds us and look out at a wilderness that prohibits our entry. Northrop Frye has termed this response to the Canadian landscape the 'paranoid mentality' and McGregor has termed it the "Warcouste syndrome."

Between 1969 and 1975 a new set of images replaces the 1954 issue. They are as follows:

- $1 "Parliament Hill across Ottawa River."
- $2 "Nature hunting scene on Baffin Island."
- $5 "Salmon fly, Johnson Strait, Vancouver Island."
- $10 "Polynesian Corporation, Sarnia, Ontario."
- $20 "Morraine Lake, Alberta."
- $50 "Dome Formation, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Musical Ride."
- $100 "Waterfront scene at Lunenburg."

These images again provide an interesting set of premises. Each of them has been carefully selected to make the change is described as follows: "There were three principal reasons for its introduction: technological advances in printing and photocopying of colored graphic material that made the earlier series more vulnerable to counterfeiting; the need to facilitate the operation of high-speed, note-sorting machines by removing all arithmetical and the development of features to assist the visually impaired."

New notes which came to be through an "advanced Canadian technology" and make "le Canada a l'avant-garde de la conception des billets de banque" picture the Canadian landscape utterly devoid of any human presence. The word "CANADA" now fills the sky of a landscape solely inhabited by birds.

Buried under assurances that these new notes are even more secure and are more helpful than before, the question that lurks is "Where did we go?" Optical security devices, electronic readouts and high-speed note-sorting machines do not provide an answer. Perhaps the question is not a relevant one at the "predominantly Canadian dimension" being technology itself and not the imaginary concern of locating Us, Here.

The 1988 issue images are as follows:

- $1 "Robin."
- $2 "Siskin."
- $5 "Belted Kingfisher."
- $10 "Owl."
- $20 "Common Loon."
- $50 "Snowy Owl."
- $100 "Canada Goose."

While the government is portrayed on the $1 bill centrally placed and looking outward from its vantage on the hilltop, the bill is portrayed as a ring looking outward. The R.C.M.P. Dome Formation on the $50 bill gives the unfortunate impression of a low force poised to attack itself, its weapons pointed into The threat of the sea presented in the previous $50 bill is replaced by an image which shows the national police force ceremonially closed in on itself in a circle with nothing at the center save the threat of its own spear.

The idea of generalized landscapes reemerges with the current series issue. The current series began in 1988 and the Bank of Canada's decision to make the change is described as follows: "There were three principal reasons for its introduction: technological advances in printing and photocopying of colored graphic material that made the earlier series more vulnerable to counterfeiting; the need to facilitate the operation of high-speed, note-sorting machines by removing all arithmetical and the development of features to assist the visually impaired."

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Further Reading


Michelina Lasho-Kalabok, Department of Banking Operations, Designing Canada's Bank Notes (Bank of Canada Review, January, 1989).

TALKING ABOUT
THE ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

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