This is a beautiful little book with its broad covers, cloth spine and endpapers of handmade Japanese paper. As I open it and leaf through the tastefully-com- posed sans-serif pages with wide margins and carefully considered assem- blages of picture and text, I reflect that it is indeed an artistic work, both in the sense that it is the work of artists, and that it represents by its form a proleptic "self- served" form of production where things are made "by hand." But do not be too sure.

Anyone expecting a tasteful stroll through the "Ideas World" of the artist will be disappointed and uncomfortable as the editors and authors of this collection seek to confront the post-industrial society in which they find themselves, as well as question directly the sources of funding that have sustained them in a sub- stance state for the last forty years.

"The central point to coalitions politics is the concept of local or community control. In cultural terms, this politics would argue for community-based cultural production where people have local control of cultural resources. Given the incursions of information as currency through free trade agreements, a living culture that has any relevance to people's lives could go the way of the forests and the East coast fishery real fast."

Caroll Conde and Karl Bevivino, "Some Thoughts on Art and the Labour Movement"

The themes of nature and community are also taken up by Paul Carter who tells the story of his theater through nature in the face of cultural genocide. Ruby Amin's "Eye" describes the way in which women's group are conceptualized by settler soci- ety as artists having an unusual ability, although in her culture producing art, which is to say, making things, is a normal everyday occurance. Shidae Kembikto, speaking in Inuktitut, tells of the ways of community through technology, education and educa- tion/industrialization. Her speech is recorded in a bilingual text.

In "Watashkwe means we'll go, a plent gone to snow." Brook Chalton weaves "a different" for the idea of community. The artists who were parts of A New Generation, An Old Culture were either sac- rificed (to high generation) Japanese Canadians.
The central point to coalition politics is the concept of local or community control. In cultural terms, this politics would argue for community-based cultural production where people have local control of cultural resources. Given the incursions of informatics as currency through free trade agreements, a living culture that has any relevance to people’s lives could go the way of the forests and the east coast fishery real fast.

The demand of Queer activism to be recognized and not just tolerated is an important model for community politics as a whole.

1984 Meeting of ANPAC, just before that unfortunate organization imploded, partly, if not wholly, under the weight of the concerns that the Coalition was formed to address. Although not part of the Community Project, Miquon Parchesky was involved at the Centre in 1984 and engaged in what then a gospel campaign designed to show that nation was inherent in Banff as an institution. The success of the campaign is demonstrated by the uproar that it generated at the Centre and by its documentation in a series of anonymous computer postings that make up its contribution to this volume. Silvestre then that they appear too anachronistic to be recognized as an effective coalition, and recalls them “with love” and in relation to her own struggles in this area. Miquon Parchesky turns up its position with a quotation from Trish Membatsa, “If your coalition is comfortable, it’s not wide enough.”

An Interview with Natawina Meyers and Mary Nash

The themes of coalitions and community is also taken up by Patsanen who tells the story of their production through resistance in the face of cultural genocide. Ruby Angra’aaua describes how the women in her group are conceptualized by settler society as artists having an unusual aptitude, although in her culture producing art, which is to say, making things, is a normal everyday occurrence. Sheda Samek, speaking in Inuktitut, tells of the essence of community through technology, relocation and education/industrialization. Her speech is recorded in a bilingual text.

In “Waterbowl” means sea called, a plant gone to seed.” Boza Kaoavane eloquently describes a different sense for the idea of community. The artists who were part of a New Generation. An Old Culture were either son or a bit generation Japanese Canadians.
or artists who had left Japan and, to some degree, its culture behind them. What they decided to do in their residency in Banff was to establish links with the local Japanese community, which, due to outside pressures, was being divided. Overcoming barriers of distrust and even of language (the actors were exclusively Anglophone), the group was able to set up joint activities and projects like filmsing and photographic documentation of the community as part of the exhibition. The result of this piece forms the basis of a diary in which he describes the idea of community as based on socializing and friendship as well as organized political action. He also tackles the problem of how artists working within a western avant-garde framework can communicate with the more traditional members of their own community.

This problem was also faced by Henry Tsang when he and Leonard Oakes set up their exhibition at the Chinese Cultural Centre in Vancouver. Tsang realized that open communication was essential to drawing an audience that, although connected by ethnicity, was separated from the artists by cultural and language barriers. The tradition-bound and purist sentiments of the people who ran the centre meant that one particular installation had to be changed and that a special effort had to be made to reach an audience that could not read the English texts. The negotiations of these difficulties encouraged Tsang and filmaker Kunai Lee to embark on an even more ambitious project, Rico-Say, a multimedia arts project focusing on AIDS educational issues and that targets young people from different cultural backgrounds. This project was situated in different community centres in the Vancouver area, but drawing malls, which should have been an ideal venue for this kind of work, refused to display the exhibit, the artist on the grounds that it promoted homosexuality. Such ideological barriers were made explicit by the activities of Second Decade, which created public service announcements about AIDS education for teenagers. Although none of their ads were explicitly political, their lack of judgment-free-nonjudgemental and nonheterosexual bias condemned them to the art gallery. Even more explicit hostility greeted the artists’ coalition, Average Good Looks, when they put up a billboard in Winnipeg targeting homosexuals. The evidence of the messages to the group’s 1,800 member list were few for their personal safety and the group was rebranded by the big Khan Bains. These events led to the formation of Queer Culture Canada (QCC) which organized interventions into mainstream events like the multicultural Folkwona festival and the theatrical Festival du Voyageur (rebranded as Festival du Vieux Port). Like Guzman, those guerrilla activities at Banff, such activities challenge established notions of what community is. The artist’s politics of Second Decade and Average Good Looks continually push the boundaries of taste and comfort and infuse the instinct for comprehensive and harmonic recognition as so constrained by some groups in the community. The demand of queer activism is to recognize and not just tolerate is an important model for communities coming to terms with style. A fundamental problem with this collection is highlighted by Chris Caughey-Jones’s postrace essay, which for the last forty years, much cultural activity in Canada has been government-sponsored or one way or another, one of the effects of the New World Order described by Tuer is the irremovable disappearance of taste from funding. The kinds of negotiation between artists and bureaucrats discussed by Kelly may soon become a thing of the past, along with funding for institutions like the Banff Centre and community centres and institutions of the kind described above. As we have seen the market-driven and ideologically inflected cultural media are not willing to give scope to artists with messages that challenge normative notions of masculinity or ideology.

In an era of increasing corporate influence over culture and social life, “community” is sometimes an ignored term. As noted in the contribution by Kevin B. Dernies and Carolle Conde, pulp and paper industries might allow workers to participate in staged/managed community consultations, but they may also insist that those workers are strategically divorced from the process.

What we see in these essays is a shift from theory to practical experience, as exemplified in the cited coloured diagram above. This shift depicts a recognisable and palpable, but at the same time, rather barren and inconsiderate figure that is partly in shadow but illuminated from the side and from behind by many shadows. This figure, which seems to symbolise the juxtaposition of race, sexuality and gender, is labelled “Power Biopolitics With You.” The editors remind us that all coalitions and communities are made up of particular people and invite us to take part and to act for change, starting with the display of the decay, a small piece of artefactistic.
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Lee to embark on an even more ambitious
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This video depicts a recognizable male, but
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from the side and from behind by many colours.
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stands atop a plane of ice, serenity and gender, is
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The editors remind us that all coalitions and
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non-fiction


This one should sell like hotcakes. First, there’s Stuart on the cover, nattily dressed in a still from famous Jean-Luc’s The Tenant, captivating the reader on his theatrical stage. Second, this collection doesn’t disappoint: made up of articles by Hall and many of the people he has worked closely with over the years, this book tracks the broad history of cultural studies through Hall’s work and demonstrates the dynamic interplay of Hall’s sometimes path-breaking work with the important contributions made by others who have pushed Hall to revise and develop his own ideas. This volume takes off from the well-known special issue of the Journal of Communication Inquiry (1986), vol. 10 no. 3, edited by Chen, but pushes the review for beyond those market boundaries. / M.H.


When Northern intellectuals of European descent turn their gaze to postcolonialism, is it a “lost,” a shift of perspective which allows the humanities to reorient themselves, or is it a genuine engagement with other literatures in other social, historical, cultural and theoretical contexts? Both an intellectual autobiography and an important critique of literary and cultural politics, Lusam’s Reading North by South is an attempt to present “readings” of the South by Northern intellectuals. Lusam asserts that “much of what the North needs and writes about the South…is deliberate and purposeful in its authority from the teleological of colonial common sense.” Commenting on the reception of the Latin American literary boom in particular, Lusam argues that Northern intellectuals were willing “to recognize the legitimacy of Southern texts but only then as the end point of their own political evolution through Latin American perspectives on literature, postmodernism and cultural studies is a question left to the reader.” / M.H.

Reviews by Stanley Fogel and Michael Hochsman


On his reasons for writing Gass once commented, “I want to rise so high that when I fall I won’t miss anybody…” sulphureous out of The Tunnel the way waste spills out of a sewer after a storm. Bile and metaphor — and metaphors about bile; these are the major components of a work twenty years in the making.

Gass, once the feature writer about fiction and theory of fiction for The New York Review of Books, produces metaphors as blithely as he breathes. Disappointment is written elegantly and innovatively: “I felt the smile I’d penciled in above my chin faded like the line beneath the last rub of an erasure.” As if homoeostatic process breathing in effortlessness, it is leisureed when the world is engaged. Only the narrator’s fists are expelled happily: “As if my buttocks did my breathing!”

Otherwise, Gass’s sly protagonist, also named Willie, a.k.a. the eminent Professor Kohler, carps at length about everything and everyone: colleagues, family, students (with the exception of those who have affairs with him). Wishing, as Gass wrote on another occasion, for another cunt from which he’d come, Willie (Kohler) decants rage, most mercilessly, onto his alcoholic mother. Nonetheless, he seems some stupendous performances for a wife whose breasts are sagging in consequence to the belly bulging over Willie’s see-through.

This personal history, featuring “my life in a chair,” takes place, for the most part, alongside the Wabash River in Indiana. It gains a greater resonansc, though, from Kohler’s employment as a professor of history — area of specialization, Nazi Germany. This allows Gass to weave together history and History, marrying winding under both, constantly promising both escape and destabilization.

Kohler’s static chemistry is situated, the references are loaded it unspecific, at Purdue University, where Gass taught and I studied. With his disdain for “new criticism” (the transparent reading of texts) and his excessive, berrens prose, Gass, twenty-five years ago, helped shape my aesthetic. He was the one who defined metafiction (fiction which articulates theory of fiction) and made it easy for many of us to move towards a deconstructive postmodern engagement with literature. If hyperthyroid Gertrude’s Rainbow is pomo’s and metafiction’s epigon, then hyperthyroid The Tunnel is its death knell. This postmodernism of Gass’s novel are the stuff of an earlier academic revolution against modernist meanings. Now, the prose that is prominent in tunnels is the graffiti in subways, the codes of other sub-cultures.

It shouldn’t be forgotten, though, that Gass’s flashebloc and insight were part of, as the historian Kohler might have it, the avant-garde’s (continuously) patch. / M.H.

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When Northern intellectuals of European descent turn to more to postcolonialism, is it a "fad," a shift of perspective which allows the humanities to agonize themselves, or is it a serious engagement with other literatures and, more importantly, other social, historical, cultural and theoretical contexts? Both an intellectual autobiography and an important critique of literary and cultural politics, Lomen's *Reading North by South* is an antidote to prevalent "readings" of the South by Northern intellectuals. Lomen asserts that "much of what the North needs and desires of the South... continues to derive its authority from the waffling of colonial common sense."" Commenting on the reception of the Latin American literary "boom" in particular, Lomen argues that Northern intellectuals were willing to "recognize the legitimacy of Southern texts but only within as this did not require the reader to question the legitimacy... of the high modereval canon itself." Whether Lomen has succeeded in avoiding this trap, or whether he has simply provided a legitimating narrative for his own response through Latin American perspectives on literature, postmodernism and cultural studies is a question left to the reader. /M.H.

Reviews by Stanley Fogel and Michael Huchthausen

Nan Goldin