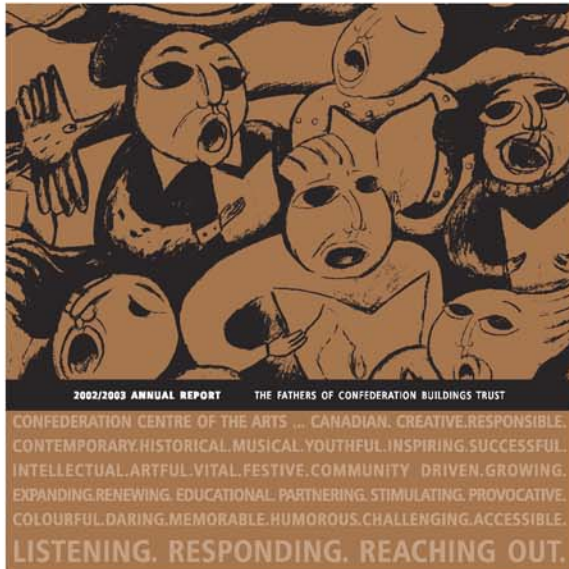


Confederation Centre Art Gallery



ANNUAL REPORT 2002 - 2003

FATHERS OF CONFEDERATION BUILDINGS TRUST

The Gallery started the year by closing for almost two months for much-needed renovations. During this period we rented a satellite exhibition space in the Arts Guild building to present our annual juried show Great Garden of the Gulf, featuring the work of Island artists.

In developing our exhibition programme, we strive to present accessible shows along with ones that are more challenging to the viewer. One can usually see this balance across the range of exhibitions at any given time throughout the year. Last summer we presented a large exhibition of works by Robert Harris, selected from the Centre's vast holdings of work by that artist. Harris is popular among many audiences – from the Island and beyond. We coupled that exhibition with Bliss, a show of contemporary work that placed local artists in an international framework. As well we presented an exhibition entitled In the Pines, curated by Adjunct Curator Andrew Hunter.

In the fall, a time when we normally start presenting exhibitions with local appeal, we presented two that dealt with military themes, engaging Veterans Affairs Canada staff in the programmes. Battle-lines, a traveling exhibition produced by the Canadian War Museum, featured sketches and paintings created by Canadian war artists in the field during the First World War. **The other thematically-related show was Somalia Yellow, by Allan Harding MacKay, Canadian war artist during the Somalia peacekeeping campaign in 1993.** Accompanying these two popular shows was the more challenging Badlands, featuring three artists who use elements of geography in their photographic work.

During the winter we presented a show of historical prints of Island views from the collection of James Macnutt. Along with this we showed a collection-based exhibition entitled Crieff. This show brought out many of the early acquisitions chosen for the Gallery's permanent collection by its first director Moncrieff Williamson, fondly remembered by many Island residents. Balancing these two well-received shows was the more demanding Found and Familiar, an exhibition of works by contemporary Canadian artists who engage the everyday snapshot format in their art.

Sequential exhibitions give us an opportunity to build interest in, and understanding of, contemporary and historical art over a sustained period of time. The Studio Series presents work by Island artists on an ongoing basis. For our Young Curators exhibitions, youth from various Island schools select works from our permanent collection and respond to them. The Writing ON the Wall series, produced in partnership with the P.E.I. Writers' Guild, melds works from the Gallery's collection with the creativity of Island writers. An important part of this series are the public presentations by the writers involved. We are partnering with the University of Prince Edward Island on a series entitled Culture Café, public panel discussions related to fields of academic inquiry such as philosophy, education, and history. A succession of music events called Gallery Gigs features performers - both young and old - in typically acoustic sets. These events are meant to build audiences among different communities and raise the profile of the Gallery. The rebuilding of the Gallery's education programme has begun. In the spring we made a determined effort to offer school tours and were successful to the extent that we could not physically accommodate any more classes. As well we began to design a focused studio arts programme that relates hands-on art activities directly to the exhibitions we are presenting.

While the Gallery's programme is already an active one, we are engaged in many research projects that will come to fruition in future years. These projects will continue to build interest in the Gallery locally, nationally, and internationally.