

CULTURAL CONVERGENCES II: ALLIANCES

Ethnocultural Art Histories Research Group (EAHR) is pleased to welcome you to *Alliances*, the second in our annual conference series, *Cultural Convergences*. We invite academics, artists, professionals, and students to participate in proactive discussions about the representation of art and artists from Canada's diverse ethnocultural communities.

Historically, the notion of alliance has had a fluid meaning. This year's conference theme seeks to explore the complexity and multiplicity of alliances by revisiting this term and its implied ideology to expand discourses on issues of cultural diversity, solidarity, and equity within the Canadian cultural milieu.

We are honoured to welcome Charles Smith, Cultural Liaison to the Dean's Office and Equity Studies Scholar, University of Toronto Scarborough as our conference keynote speaker. Mr. Smith is an accomplished scholar in the fields of cultural pluralism, critical race theory, and equity studies. We look forward to his lecture titled "Black Heterogeneity: Moving Beyond Transactions into a New Space" which will examine the many challenges and benefits of forming alliances between artists of colour and other marginalized groups, especially within arts policies and funding initiatives.

This year, we are also pleased to present a showcase presentation in partnership with the Montreal-based *Qouleur Collective* focusing on the work of building communities that centralize the experiences of self-identified Two-Spirited and LGBTQ Indigenous people and people of colour. Two exciting performances by invited Toronto-based artist Alvis Parsley and Montreal-based artist Kama La Mackerel, are followed by a panel discussion organized by *Qouleur Collective*.

EAHR's activities are made possible with the support of The Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute for Studies in Canadian Art and the Department of Art History at Concordia University. The *Alliances* conference has been organized with the additional support of the Concordia Art History Graduate Student Association and the Concordia University Small Grants Program. EAHR gratefully acknowledges its sponsors, volunteers and faculty advisor.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2014

17:00-17:15 - Welcome and Opening Remarks

17:15-20:30 - SHOWCASE PRESENTATION

PERFORMANCES

- **Kama La Mackerel, Artist, Performer, and Cultural Critic, Montreal:** Our resilience is beautiful, or why the revolution will not be cited!
- **Alvis Parsley, Performance Artist, Toronto:** Never Left Canada (Excerpt)

BRIEF INTERMISSION

QOULEUR MEMBERS' PANEL: Art Activism in 2QTPOC Communities: Making Space to Tell Our Stories

- **Laila Ait Bouchtba**
- **mihee-nathalie lemoine**
- **Gregorio Pablo Rodríguez-Arbolay Jr.**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2014

09:00-09:30 - Registration and Coffee Reception

09:30-09:45 - Welcome Remarks

09:45-12:00 - PANEL 1: Without Borders: Exchange and Representation

Moderator: Amelia Wong-Mersereau, BA Communications and Cultural Studies, Concordia University

Discussant: Mary Sui Yee Wong, Instructor, Fibres, Concordia University

- **Katherine Pickering, Instructor, University of British Columbia Kelowna:** Peer-to-Peer Artist in Residence Projects
- **Kerri-Lynn Reeves, MFA Candidate, Concordia University:** The Contact Zones of Community Engagement
- **Eleanor Dumouchel, MA Candidate in Art History, Concordia University:** James Houston's Best Intentions: Cosmopolitan Modernisms at the Cape Dorset Printmaking Studio

- **Braden Scott, MA Student in Film Studies, Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, Concordia University:** If the Tool Fits: Subversions of Racial Identity in Queer Independent Cinema

12:00-13:00 – LUNCH

13:00-14:45 – PANEL 2: Museum as Ally? Curatorial Perspectives on Alliances

Moderator: Tianmo Zhang, MA Student in Art History, Concordia University

Discussant: Claudia Marion Stemberger, PhD Candidate in Art History, McGill University

- **Joana Joachim, MA Candidate in Museology, Université de Montréal:** Art, Identity and Youth: Transformations in Canadian and South African Galleries
- **Zofia Krivdova, MA in Art History, Concordia University:** Stealing the Gaze: Collaborative Curatorial Practices and Indigenous Art
- **Lucile Pages, MA Candidate in Art History, Concordia University:** Contemporary South African Art in New York City: A Group Exhibition Case Study

14:45- 15:00 – COFFEE BREAK

15:00-16:45 - SESSION 4: Negotiating the Spaces of Alliances

Moderator: Camille Usher, BFA in Art History, Concordia University

Discussant: Dr. Anne Whitelaw, Associate Dean – Research, Associate Professor in Art History, Concordia University

- **Mikhel Proulx, PhD Student in Art History, Concordia University:** CyberPowWow's Intercultural Gathering Sites
- **Erika Ashley Couto, MA Candidate in Art History, Concordia University;** Negotiating Identities: Ethical Space in the Works of Amy Malbeuf and Meryl McMaster
- **Sarah Nesbitt, MA Candidate in Art History, Concordia University;** Let's all make it out ok, ok? (deep breath, deep breath)

16:45-17:00 – COFFEE BREAK

17:00-18:00 – KEYNOTE: Charles Smith, Lecturer in Cultural Pluralism in the Arts, University of Toronto Scarborough

18:00-21:00 – RECEPTION, co-hosted by EAHR and the Concordia Art History Graduate Student Association (AHGSA), EV-11.175

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

DAY 1 – September 26

Kama La Mackerel, *Our resilience is beautiful, or why the revolution will not be cited!*

“Our resilience is beautiful, or why the revolution will not be cited,” is a performance lecture comprised of three spoken word pieces, each located at the intersection of race, gender and class. Through poetry and storytelling, the legacy of racialized and colonized minds, bodies and communities is reclaimed. This piece is an attempt at healing, this piece is an attempt at creating accountability, this piece is an attempt at new modes of living and existing in the world.

Kama La Mackerel is a performance artist, community organizer and cultural critic whose work draws on the themes of feminism, queerness, alienation, displacement, colonization and failures. A poet, story-teller, dancer, comedian, and video artist, Kama is also the co-founder of Qouleur, an annual arts festival by and for queer Indigenous and racialized communities in Montreal, and is the founder and host of GENDER B(L)ENDER, Montréal's unique monthly queer open mic. Kama has one aim in life: to heal collectively with other people of color and to decolonize stages, spaces, bodies and communities.

Alvis Parsley, *Never Left Canada (Excerpt)*

This piece was created during my residency at lemonTree creations in April 2014. I was working with director Gein Wong. It is a work-in-progress. I was taught to give the "right" answer, not the true answer. I was taught to lie because nobody in power wants to hear the TRUTH. "What's your citizenship?" My brain split into two at the customs. IN RESPONSE TO the systemic problems that affect my life on a daily basis, I cannot plan my art. I cannot answer the question "How have you been?" without only considering how I am doing that particular day. There is always something going on. A friend moves away, getting sick, no food in the fridge, there are only 28 days this month and I gotta pay rent soon, someone's hurt, someone dies.

I am less than 1% of the population. I am Wittgenstein, Lars von Trier, Hitler, Mother Teresa, Leonard Cohen, Marilyn Manson, Al Pacino, Adrien Brody, Daniel Day-Lewis, Edward Norton, Tilda Swinton, Cate Blanchett,

Michelle Pfeiffer, Nicole Kidman among all the other white folks that I know on the famous INFJs list. I am also Laden, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Chiang Kai-shek. An exhausted BODY trying to be many.

Alvis Parsley (aka Alvis Choi) is named in BLOUIN ARTINFO Canada's Top 30 Under 30. Their work was presented at SummerWorks Festival, Mayworks Festival, Art of the Danforth, Gladstone Hotel, Rhubarb Festival, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, World Pride 2014, National Queer Arts Festival (Bay Area), and the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics (NYU). Alvis serves on the working collective of Whippersnapper Gallery, the Board of the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter and the Board of Mayworks Festival.

Qouleur, Art Activism in 2QTPOC Communities: Making Space to Tell Our Stories

This presentation focuses on the work that Qouleur has been doing as a Montreal-based grassroots collective of self-identified Two-Spirited, trans* and queer Indigenous people and people of colour (2QTPOC) who are artists and activists. We will address how our work is situated at the intersections of our multiple identities and how we are working in solidarity across our differences. We will share insights and challenges that we have experienced organizing as a collective. We will outline how Qouleur is working with other communities in Montreal to address particular issues affecting 2QTPOCs and address further work that needs to be done to reach out to members of the community. We will show how our community work is grounded in arts-based activism and provide documentation from the Qouleur Festival, which was organized for its 3rd year this August 2014.

Qouleur is a grassroots collective of self-identified Two-Spirited, trans* and queer Indigenous people and people of colour. We are grounded in creating anti-oppressive spaces, resisting colonial legacies, committing to Indigenous solidarity and creating alliances across our differences. We build community through empowerment, skill-sharing and the creation of support networks. We believe in using art to self-represent, challenge dominant narratives and institutions, and document our identities and experiences. The members of Qouleur who will be presenting at *Alliances* are Laila Ait Bouchtba, Soleil Launière, Gregorio Pablo Rodríguez-Arbolay Jr., and Colleen Young,

DAY 2 - September 27

PANEL 1: Without Borders: Exchange and Representation

Katherine Pickering, Peer-to-Peer Artist in Residence Projects

This presentation will discuss small-scale artist in residence projects that are based on the model of the sharing economy. Most residencies are large, established programs, or are otherwise connected to a gallery or cultural centre. The growing popularity of the peer-to-peer economy has encouraged the emergence of small, not-for-profit residencies that can be simply administered by an individual artist during their free time. Due to the informal nature of these residency projects, their impact on Canadian artists is rarely acknowledged. However, these intimate residencies have enormous potential to create alliances between participating artists, the host community, and the host, particularly because they are collaborative economies that build on nascent relationships. The “Bus From Guadalajara” artist in residence project in Jalisco, Mexico, founded by the author in 2010, will be used as a case study to demonstrate the benefits of these small-scale residency projects. Many Canadian artists have connections to diverse communities both within and outside of Canada. Small-scale artist in residence projects will be discussed in view of encouraging these artists to invite others into their communities by becoming residency hosts.

Katherine Pickering received an MFA in Studio Art from Concordia University's Painting and Drawing Department in 2009 and a BFA in Visual Art from the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus, in 2006. She has exhibited and attended residencies in Turkey, Iceland, and Canada, including residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts (2008), the Vermont Studio Center (2011 & 2013), and the Terra Nova National Park Artist in Residence Program in Newfoundland (2011). She lives in Vernon, British Columbia and teaches painting and drawing at the University of British Columbia in Kelowna.

Kerri-Lynn Reeves, The Contact Zones of Community Engagement

This presentation broadly looks at the cultural output that has resulted from the continued convergences between Aboriginal communities and Settler communities in North America, which have been primarily antagonistic, but also have had moments of great alliance. Specifically, this

presentation will address the current cultural trends towards appropriation of Indigenous cultures, especially dress and iconography, and how artists, academics, and activists are fighting against this. This presentation will put forward the notion that this complex issue is complexified further when one considers the vast amount of cultural appropriation, influence, and blending that has taken place between Aboriginal and Settler cultures over the years (ex. beads, bannock, Calico prints, etc.), and by the fact that much of Settler culture itself (ex. canning, DIY housewares, Cowboy fashion, etc.) is also being appropriated, commodified, and corporatized.

Using as an example a politically and socially engaged artistic residency at the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts in Santa Fe, NM, I will present on the collaborative interventionist work of myself (of Settler descent) and The Ephemerals (a collective of Aboriginal descent) that will take place during this residency. We will be forming a temporary artistic alliance and crossing the bounds of our home communities and into new territory to explore notions of cultural representation, appropriation, and inspiration in dress and art, and most importantly the political potency of these acts.

Kerri-Lynn Reeves is an interdisciplinary artist, curator, and writer from Winnipeg, Manitoba. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts – Honours degree from the University of Manitoba and is currently a Master of Fine Arts candidate at Concordia University. She has received awards from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Winnipeg Arts Council, Manitoba Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts, and has participated in residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts, the Deep Bay Cabin, and Mildred's Lane. At the heart of it, her work explores the relationship of the social and the material.

Eleanor Dumouchel, James Houston's Best Intentions: Cosmopolitan Modernisms at the Cape Dorset Printmaking Studio

The facts surrounding Canadian artist James Houston's introduction of block-printing techniques at the Cape Dorset printmaking studio in the late 1950s are well known. However, questions remain as to the reasons why Houston, who perceived Inuit sculpture's "link between past and present" as "yet unbroken," travelled to Japan in the winter of 1958 to learn traditional wood-block printing techniques from members of the *sōsaku hanga* creative print movement. The *sōsaku hanga* print movement, founded in the 1910s by Yamamoto Kanae, would be developed by succeeding generations as a means of dismissing the Western verdict that there are no Japanese artists, only identity-less Japanese craftsmen. By

adopting a strategy of self-Orientalization, adhering to "Japanese" subject matter and mysticism within the framework of modernist aesthetic and philosophy, printmakers could be recognized as simultaneously Japanese and modern artists on the global stage. Drawing on critical ethnographer Brian Moeran's "strategic exchange perspective," which acknowledges local cultural producers' use of dominant global constructs to their benefit, this presentation asks whether Houston went to Japan to import not only Japanese tools and methods, but also a subversive method of inserting Inuit art into the modernist discourse. However, in spite of Houston's strategy, the Cape Dorset print-makers, who included Kenojuak Ashevak and Kanganginak Pootoogook, would modify *sōsaku hanga* methods, leaving the prescribed portioning of Southern notions of "Inuitness" and "fine art," to suit their creative needs.

Eleanor Dumouchel is entering her second year as an MA student in Art History at Concordia University. Her thesis research attempts to situate a mid-sixteenth century tapestry based on Hieronymus Bosch's *Haywain* triptych with regards to the millennial complex of imperial Spain. She completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and is presently an executive member of the Aboriginal Art Research Group. After her MA, she hopes to pursue her studies in the field of global renaissance studies.

Braden Scott, If the Tool Fits: Subversions of Racial Identity in Queer Independent Cinema

Approaching the histories of the Black subject in Western cinema requires an alliance of art histories and visual cultures, critical race theories, histories of slavery, and philosophical agency. How do paintings such as Joseph Mallord William Turner's *Slave Ship* (1840) or François-Auguste Biard's *Slaves on the West Coast of Africa* (1833) translate as documentation of the troublesome history of Black subjugation by the white hands of European slave cultures? In the first part of this essay, I will explore Isaac Julien's usage of *tableau vivant* – the corporeal reconstruction and three-dimensional living enactment of a work of art – as a method of querying the power structures and *telling of* Black history in Biard's painting with acts of consensual Sadomasochism. The second part of the essay will explore the films *Proteus* (2003) and *Desperate Living* (1977), positioning both as convergences of the opposing theories of resistance as discussed by activists Audre Lord, a Black lesbian scholar, and Michel Foucault, a white gay historian. Focusing heavily on the filmic

stereotypes drawn from slavery cultures that have stuck to Black actresses and actors, I will explore the ways in which the depictions of Black subjects can, but working from within the racist paradigm of Western visual culture as a critical outsider to its prejudice, begin an unraveling process of racial stereotypes.

Braden Scott is a graduate of the MFA Art History program at Concordia University, with a minor degree in Sexuality and currently a MA student in Film Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, he was the recipient of the singular Graduate Entrance Film Studies Scholarship from the Fondation De Sève Awards, a Concordia Merit Scholarship, and a Faculty of Fine Arts Scholarship. His current interests linger among the histories of architecture, cinema, and art, complimented with feminist, anti-racist, and matrixial theories and criticisms.. He hopes to converge these interests within his film studies degree by looking at spatial spectatorial practices in contemporary Aboriginal cinema.

PANEL 2: Museum as Ally? Curatorial Perspectives on Alliances

Joana Joachim, Art, Identity and Youth: Transformations in Canadian and South African Galleries

Museums have long since been accepted as the centre of collective memory and national identity. The process of memory making in cultural institutions is selective and involves choices of what is and what is not remembered or conserved for the future. It is troubling to perceive that within this process, a single leading voice is being heard. Historically, in both Canada and South Africa, the power dynamic within museums has been used as a means to reinforce a national identity that excludes many minority groups, namely Black communities. The subordination of marginalized cultures by these institutions has a negative impact on minority groups in relation to the development of their ethnic identities, particularly in youth. This development is crucial in understanding the issues they face in contemporary society. This paper will attempt to examine the ways in which the transformations undergone by art museums and galleries in Canada and South Africa over the last decades can contribute to building a positive relationship between museums and minority groups thus encouraging positive self-image and a sense of belonging in Black youth among others.

Joana Joachim is a Université de Montréal student completing an MA in Museology. She obtained a BA Degree in Fine Art from the University of Ottawa. Ms. Joachim is interested in contemporary African Canadian and African American art dealing with notions of identity and self. Her current research interests revolve around the role of the art museum as a marker of cultural identity and the possibility of using the museum as a tool to encourage positive social changes. In 2011, Ms. Joachim was part of the curating team for *Re: Collection*, a group exhibition of MFA and BFA artists at the University of Ottawa. The following year, she was appointed as student director of *Paradigm[e]: The Dean's Gallery* a student-run exhibition space. In the summer of 2014, Ms. Joachim had the opportunity to complete an internship at the Wits Art Museum in Johannesburg, South Africa to extend her knowledge and understanding to the social roles of art museums.

Zofia Krivdova, *Steeling the Gaze: Collaborative Curatorial Practices and Indigenous Art*

My research is focused on the exhibition *Steeling the Gaze: Portraits by Aboriginal Artists* that ran from Fall 2008 to Spring 2009 at the National Gallery of Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, and curated by Steven Loft and Andrea Kunard. The show featured works by twelve Indigenous artists. This exhibition was significant because it was a collaborative project on many levels, and was a major advance on the part of the CMCP and the NGC, and the curators working there. *Steeling the Gaze* was a decolonizing exhibition in the way in which the curators collaborated on researching, organizing and displaying the exhibition.

Taking into consideration artistic, institutional, political and personal realities, an alliance in the case of this exhibition meant the curators' engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems and with Indigenous peoples. Through *Steeling the Gaze*, the curators aimed to de-centre institutional and curatorial authority in the exhibition, and encouraged multi-voicing through collaboration with the artists and encouraging the public to participate by being asked what they were being shown. More importantly, the curators created dialogue between the artists themselves through the curatorial choices, and maintained dialogue between the curators and the artists.

Zofia Krivdova is a second year MA student at Concordia University in Montreal. She graduated from York University in Toronto with an undergraduate major in art history, and moved to Montreal in 2010 to pursue graduate studies. She gained curatorial experience by working with a heritage organization in Mississauga, near Toronto for several years. Under the supervision of Anne Whitelaw, Zofia is exploring institutional practices of exhibition and interpretation of works by Aboriginal artists, focusing on the exhibition *Stealing the Gaze: Portraits by Aboriginal Artists* and the National Gallery of Canada. Her thesis research explores collaboration as vital to curatorial practices in order to accept different worldviews and voices, and in the decolonizing of the museum, of curatorial practice, of research and of knowledge production.

Lucile Pages, Contemporary South African Art in New York City: a Group Exhibition Case Study

Following the groundbreaking 1989 exhibition “Magiciens de la terre” in Paris, countless exhibitions, essays and symposia have been held around the world in the hope of understanding and defining contemporary African art. Founded in 1984, the Museum for African Art in New York City has played a leading role in presenting both historical and contemporary African Art with exhibitions such as “Art/Artifact: African Art in Anthropology Collections” (1988) or “Africa Explores: 20th Century African Art” (1991). My research examines the Museum for African Art's contribution to the broad debate on the nature of contemporary African Art by focusing on one particular exhibition, “Personal Affects: Power and Poetics in contemporary South African Art” (2004).

Proposed and funded by the South African businessman and patron Dick Enthoven and organized by five curators, of which four are from Cape Town and Johannesburg, the exhibition presented what seemed to be a real alliance between the South African and the United States. Exhibiting artists from South Africa and its diaspora, the display intended to showcase their personal reflections about “the complexity of life in South Africa a decade since the country's first democratic elections.” (Exhibition catalogue, 18) The curatorial team purposely stepped away from “identity” and political themes, which were, as explained by the curator Liese Van der Watt, largely explored by other anniversary exhibitions worldwide. (46) Framed under the concept of “post-identity” (47) the exhibition went beyond the classical solution-making group display, and approached the question of identity in a more fragmented way, as “a signal of departure,

but no arrival.” (47) The final display offered the visitors a complex and elaborated notion of identity in South Africa.

Despite the value of exploring a new concept of identity, I will argue that the exhibition was an homogenized display of artists that corresponded to a certain definition of contemporary art. This definition is derived from a dominant western art historical narrative, which excludes black Africans artists working in traditional arts and crafts. This phenomenon, not proper to the “Personal Affects” exhibition, is, I believe, the result of two main issues. The first one is the predominance of a western conception of contemporary art in South Africa and worldwide - in art history and within the international art market - which diminishes the historical and conceptual importance of traditional South African art. The second issue is the dualistic vision of traditional and contemporary arts, a symptomatic dichotomy reminiscent of what Salah Hassan has described as the “before and after colonialism” postmodernist critical discourse, which simplifies African countries' histories to colonialism as the only major historical event of the continent.

“Personal Affects: Power and Poetics in contemporary South African Art” can be seen as both a new type of alliance, a South African exhibition hosted by a western institution, and an artificial one governed by western conceptions and interpretations of contemporary art.

Lucile Pages is a current MA candidate in Art History at Concordia University, having previously earned a BA in Art History from l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). During her undergraduate studies Lucile completed internships at *esse arts + opinions* in Montréal and at *Le Journal des Arts* in Paris. She continues to work periodically for *esse* and is the current Event Coordinator for the Aboriginal Art Research Group (AARG) at Concordia University.

PANEL 3: Negotiating the Spaces of Alliances

Mikhel Proulx, CyberPowWow's Intercultural Gathering Sites

Taglined “*An Aboriginally determined territory in cyberspace,*” CyberPowWow was the first online gallery of First Peoples' net art. It was launched in 1997. Throughout its eight-year run, the biennial project saw four iterations develop self-determined online 'territories' on the early Web. The project served to house Aboriginal network-based art, and also written stories and critical texts, and a graphical chat service live year-

round. Additionally, the project held 'gathering sites'-- real-world events held in over twenty artist-run centres across Turtle Island that would see the launch of these new exhibitions. For the project organizers there was a concentrated effort to reach out to Indigenous communities and foster these events in both physical and virtual spaces that would see the interfacing of multiple publics. And like the historically cross-Tribal pow-wow, these gatherings were geared toward inclusivity from the outset--to produce, as organizer Archer Pechawis described, "a 'place where Native meets non-Native', be it technologically, socially, or culturally." I propose to consider the various inter- and transcultural imperatives of CyberPowWow. Demonstrably, the project's artists and organizers both independently developed outreach strategies, and worked with arts organizations, artist-run centres, and Native friendship organizations to build alliances between these various actors and communities.

Mikhel Proulx, French Métis, Irish, Danish, is a cultural researcher engaged with contemporary art and performance, critical internet studies, and digital visual cultures. His artworks and curated projects have been shown in Canada, the USA, Jerusalem, Germany and Austria. He holds a BFA in Drawing from the Alberta College of Art and Design and an MA in Art History from Concordia University, where he is currently a PhD student.

Erika Ashley Couto, *Negotiating Identities: Ethical Space in the Works of Amy Malbeuf and Meryl McMaster*

In his introduction to *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (2010), Lorenzo Veracini makes a case for the study of settler colonies as distinct from other forms of colonialism. Whereas exploitation colonies either imported or exported labourers and explorers, settler colonies such as Canada and Australia are unique; they were formed by residents of a colonizing country leaving their homeland to form a new, "better" country (Veracini 3). This critical difference results in a condition in which the "settler coloniser" both wishes to distance themselves from the "exogenous other" (the homeland) and eliminate the "Indigenous colonised" in order to become indigenous themselves (Veracini 16, 95). While Veracini admits that these groups are "open to ongoing and protracted contestation, are never neatly separate, mutually shape each other, and are continually tested and reproduced," his entire argument relies on the rigid perpetuation of these categories to explain the formation and structure of settler colonial societies (19).

There are many individuals living in Canada today who are both Indigenous and European-settler descent. Artists Meryl McMaster and Amy Malbeuf fall under such heritage – McMaster is of Plains Cree descent on her father's side, and of British, Scottish, and Dutch descent on her mother's, while Malbeuf is Métis. Their performance works explore their personal heritage and the difficulties that come with being somewhere in between Veracini's settler coloniser and Indigenous colonised categories; their mixed heritage makes them at once the victims and perpetrators of colonial violence. How, then, can these artists and other individuals of Euro-Indigenous descent be incorporated into the settler colonial discourse? My argument is twofold: that Willie Ermine's notion of "ethical space" addresses this critical dearth in Veracini's theory, and that Malbeuf and McMaster's performance works situate themselves in this ethical space, speaking both to settler and Indigenous aspects of their heritage by blending Indigenous and settler languages and concepts of time.

Erika Ashley Couto is an Art and Architectural Historian based in Montreal. She is currently completing her MA at Concordia University in Art History, specializing in the contemporary Inuit art and architecture. Erika is the founder and Graduate Director of the Aboriginal Art Research Group and she works as a curatorial assistant for the Brousseau Inuit Art Collection at the Musée National des Beaux-Arts. Broadly, she is interested in the effect of post-WWII North American expansion and shifting social ideologies on architecture. Erika's current research, funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Fonds de recherche sur la société et la culture (FRQSC), traces the history of the domestic interior in Inuit graphic arts and examines the connections between Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit traditional knowledge) and the domestic sphere in the graphic arts of Itee and Annie Pootoogook. Her writing has been published in *Situation Gallery*, *Afterimages*, and *Historiae*.

Sarah Nesbitt, *Let's all make it out ok, ok?* (deep breath, deep breath)

Based on a performance and spatial intervention at Concordia University in May, 2014, my paper via the intervention investigates hidden aspects of the university's architecture, both literally, and socio-politically. Recognizing its contentious nature as a space of greater access, while remaining stratified in more or less subtle ways along gendered, classist and racial lines. In particular, I am interested in what it means to form alliances in a settler colonial situation and as a settler. Coming from this perspective, I identify colonization as deeply rooted in and acted out in

spatial politics, as such I take the perspective that thinking spatially in a Canadian context must always necessarily be conjoined with an attentiveness to the urgency for active decolonization. The March 2014 murder of MA candidate and Aboriginal activist Loretta Saunders further impressed upon me the need to use my intervention to increase the visibility of the often illegible ties that bind systematic racism to privileged spaces of the university. Drawing on Indigenous scholars such as David Garneau and settler artists such as Leah Decter and Carla Taunton for inspiration, *Let's all make it out ok, ok?* addresses poignant absences and privilege, veering away from tropes of guilt and binary terms.

Sarah Nesbitt is an MA candidate in Art History at Concordia University. Interested in interdisciplinary approaches, she seeks opportunities of exchange, when possible working in the form of performance or intervention. Her current research addresses the relationship between space, identity formation, and colonization/decolonization. Sarah is currently engaging the former topics in her Masters thesis, which compares the iconographic and social trajectories of a series of recent interactive settler memorial plaques on Boulevard Saint Laurent in Montreal, and large rock placed on the campus of McGill University, which memorializes the historic Haudenosaunee settlement of Hochelaga.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Black Heterogeneity: Moving Beyond Transactions into a New Space

Charles Smith, Cultural Liaison, Dean's Office,
University of Toronto Scarborough

As keynote speaker, I plan on presenting the many challenges and benefits to forging alliances amongst artists of colour with those from other marginalized groups, e.g., Aboriginal, deaf and disabled, poor and working class, LGBTQ and others. This keynote will provide me with opportunities to articulate my growing research, scholarship, creative writing, teaching, performance and activities in the arts, particularly as it concerns "Black particularity and diaspora" and the concerns I have about the dangers of homogeneity in theorizing, writing/educating about and forming alliances with other artists in marginalized communities.

My concerns here will challenge the increasing marginalization of Blackness within arts policy and funding and theoretical concepts of racial and cultural diversity that essentialize and, in doing so, purposefully or otherwise blur distinctions between diverse racialized groups and their

artistic practices. I will also challenge notions of/homogenization/essentialism within the Black/African diaspora as dangerous to the realization of the breadth and diversity within this community and its significance to Canadian history, culture and identity.

With little to no increase in public funding to the arts and increasing demand for such funding, I have been hearing many stories from marginalized artists and arts organizations who are very concerned about this and are struggling to survive while watching some of their colleagues and allies close their doors. These are very difficult issues as they challenge policy makers and funders to come to understand and appreciate the impact of Western hegemonic philosophies and practices on the arts and upon the representations of diverse individuals and groups to Canadian culture and identity. Such funder categories and terminology as 'equity and disability arts', 'culturally diverse arts' etc are dangerous in that they essentialize across vast terrains, including cultural practices and histories. They also create a harmful sense of competitiveness amongst marginalized artists who compete for more limited pools of funding within such programs while at the same time casting their work into programs that separate them from ongoing and more robust funding categories and, in doing so, create what can only be called 'funding ghettos'.

This is also a challenge to marginalized artists. Many know there will be no significant shift in policy and funding specifically to support such art, its practices and production, and to institutionally engage in a transformative discourse around the themes I will raise in my paper. With this knowledge, and knowing full well who will be impacted the most, marginalized artists have seemingly succumb to the systems that exist, those that are institutionally constructed and driven, those that seem either unable or unwilling to understand. It is here that we must question our responsibility to ourselves? How do we take from what is available to build toward a collective change that honours each, that recognizes our particularity and gives us insights about what we can bring to each other and what we'd like to receive from one another? How do we take on the same issues and challenges that this paper raises and, in doing so, how do we strengthen our own creations and identities in the arts?

As an active scholar in the fields of cultural pluralism, critical race theory, and equity studies, **Charles Smith** has contributed to research on anti-racism and arts policies in Canada and has consulted numerous cultural organizations on the development and implementation of equity and diversity policies and practices. Along with his teaching position at the

University of Toronto Scarborough, Mr. Smith is the founder and Project Lead for Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario, a member of the Canadian Court Challenges Program/Equality Rights Panel and a Research Associate with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. He has recently published *Pluralism in the Arts in Canada: A Change is Gonna Come* (2012) and *Anti-Racism in Education: Missing in Action* (2010) and is the Artistic Director of wind in the leaves collective, an interdisciplinary performance group. His new book of poetry, *travelogue of the bereaved* will be released this fall by TSAR Publications as well as a new book of non-fiction, *The Dirty War*, which will be released by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

About the Ethnocultural Art Histories Research Group (EAHR)

The Ethnocultural Art Histories Research Group (EAHR) is a student-driven research community based within the Art History Department of Concordia University. Since the summer of 2011, EAHR facilitates opportunities for exchange and creation in the examination of, and engagement with, issues of ethnic and cultural representation within the visual arts in Canada. Open to students and faculty invested or interested in engaging with issues of cultural representation and ethnocultural art histories research across various disciplines, our activities include symposia, curatorial projects, discussion groups, and exhibition visits. EAHR distinguishes itself through its membership and executive committee, which comprises of undergraduate, graduate and alumni of Concordia University and beyond.

EAHR Conference Committee 2014-2015:

Victoria Nolte, Graduate Coordinator (January 2014-present)

Judith Landry, Undergraduate Coordinator (April 2014-present)

Tianmo Zhang, Graduate Finance Coordinator (July 2014-present)

Joana Joachim, Graduate Media Coordinator (July 2014-present)

Amelia Wong-Mersereau, Undergraduate Media Coordinator (July 2014-present)

Brittany Watson, EAHR Member-at-Large

Rajee Paña Jeji Shergill, EAHR Member-at-Large

Marlee Parsons, EAHR Member-at-Large

Claude Bock, EAHR Member-at-Large

Special thanks to our Faculty Advisor, Dr. Alice Ming Wai Jim and to Adrienne Johnson, EAHR Founding Member at Large.



Ethnocultural Art Histories Research
A 100% student-driven workgroup

Cultural Convergences II: ALLIANCES

Keynote: Charles Smith, University of Toronto Scarborough
Friday September 26
and Saturday September 27, 2014

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