DECEMBER 27, 2024

GONE BUT ALWAYS REMEMBERED CANADIAN ART LIVES LIVED

Recollections of celebrated figures in Canadian art by their colleagues, peers, and friends.





As the year draws to a close, we are remembering the passing of brilliant artists and cultural leaders who profoundly impacted this country's landscape with their talent, innovative spirit, and remarkable achievements. Their legacies will have an impact for generations to come. This week's newsletter is dedicated to them with recollections from their peers, friends, and colleagues who offer heartfelt words. The names below are gone but

not forgotten. Their passion, intellect, work, and warmth remain embedded in the memories of all those privileged to know them and their contributions. **Sara Angel**

Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

ALEX JANVIER, CM, AOE, RCA FEBRUARY 28, 1935 – JULY 10, 2024

World-renowned Indigenous Canadian artist celebrated for his vibrant colour palette and lyrical abstract style





Alex Janvier, *Lubicon*, 1988, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton.

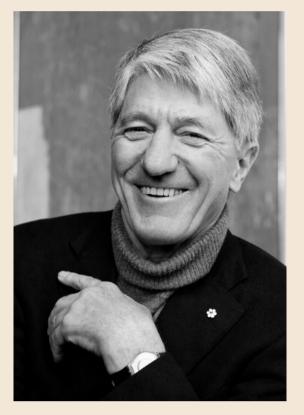
Artist Alex Janvier at his gallery in Cold Lake First Nations, Alberta, in February 2017, photograph by Jason Franson / The Canadian Press.

"I knew Alex Janvier, as we used to call him, for over forty-five years. He was Dene and I'm Plains Cree, two tribes that historically were not always friends, but between us it developed into casual jokes of each other. We shared a passionate belief and strived for a better world that recognized the historical and contemporary contributions of Indigenous peoples and artists. Living on the land in his home community for most of his life, eschewing the big city, he managed to create an envied career."

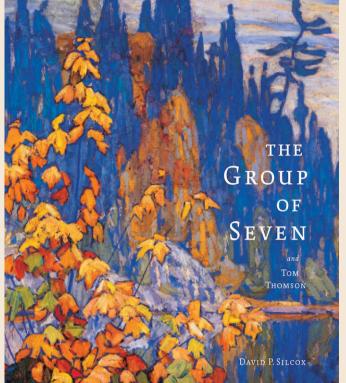
—Gerald McMaster, OC, PhD, Plains Cree and a member of the Siksika Nation, curator, artist, and author

DAVID P. SILCOX, CM JANUARY 28, 1937 – FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Art historian and cultural administrator; former managing director of Sotheby's Canada and senior fellow at Massey College



David P. Silcox, date unknown, photograph by Martin Lipman / Canada Council.



Cover of *The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson*, by David P. Silcox (Firefly Books, 2003).

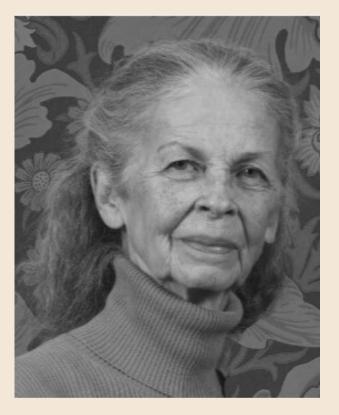
"Passionate, original, and willing to blaze new trails, David Silcox believed Canadian art was made by the people, for the people. To him, this country's artists were important public citizens, and the job of art administrators, curators, writers, and dealers was to open that world up for all Canadians. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when leading the visual art departments of various government and educational organizations, including the Canada Council, he visited artist studios and galleries in search of the best and the brightest, encouraging artists from Halifax to Regina to Edmonton to Victoria to Quebec City to apply for grants, making sure he left no stone unturned. He was relentless in establishing the web of relationships instrumental in building a national culture. As an author, David produced many notable books, including Tom Thomson: The Silence and the Storm (with Harold Town) and his magisterial catalogue raisonné on the artist David Milne, which he developed over the course of two decades. In his publications, David's plain-spokenness established a new trend in Canadian art writing; he wrote from the heart, always championing the artist's voice. The final stage of David's career was twelve years at the helm of Sotheby's Canada, a period that saw him criss-crossing the country again, this time connecting with collectors who shared his passion, forging new friendships, and making deals. The lively market for Canadian art that we have today owes much to his joie de vivre and flair in that role. With David's passing, we lost one of the country's finest art writers, art administrators, and art dealers. In these positions, he used his days with purpose and generosity, promoting the talent of others and offering encouragement, open-heartedness, and help to a rising generation of artists and arts professionals. We are all in his debt."

-Sarah Milroy, Executive Director & Chief Curator, McMichael Canadian Art

Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario

CAROLE CONDÉ JUNE 27, 1940 – JULY 19, 2024

A leading figure in the development of a political and communitybased art practice; founding member of Toronto's Mayworks Festival and Hamilton's Workers Arts and Heritage Centre; active in A Space Gallery for forty years



Carole Condé, date unknown, photographer unknown.



Carole Condé and Karl Beveridge, *Not a Care:* 1907, 2000, Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa.

"Carole was amazing. She was always making things: presents for friends, rugs, stained glass, pies and cakes, trade union banners, and the sets, props, and costumes for our staged photographs. Carole also questioned everything, every idea, every image. She had little tolerance for pretension and little patience for intellectual conceit. She felt at home in the labour movement: its collectivity and down to earth-ness. To her, art was an expression of opposition and hope. Opposition to those who exploit others and use art to cover up their misdeeds. Hope for a just and safe world."

-Karl Beveridge, partner and collaborator

AUGUST 4, 1929 – JULY 1, 2024 Cape Breton Island– and New York City–based artist known for her abstract allegorical paintings and drawings



June Leaf, The Mabou Giant, 2022.

photograph by Brian Graham.

June Leaf in the early 1990s,

"To create life out of life, that is what I want to do." —June Leaf

"June was a painter, a sculptor, a maker, and the figure was always at the foundation of her practice. Her life and career spanned a century. She worked in the studio every day of her life. I would visit her and find her in her studio with a blowtorch and metal or a paintbrush up to the months before she died. We worked together on her exhibition *June Leaf in Mabou Since 1969*, at the Inverness County Centre for the Arts in 2022. The show highlighted the influence the people of Cape Breton, her home of over fifty years, had on June and her work. As we pored over drawings and paintings and sculptures of friends, June remembered every name and life story, every cup of tea shared. Every death mourned. Making life out of life is most certainly what she did, and she will be dearly missed."

—Emily Falencki, Founder & Director, The Blue Building, Halifax

ANTOINE PREDOCK JUNE 24, 1936 – MARCH 2, 2024

Distinguished architect who designed the Canadian Museum for Human Rights



Antoine Predock at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, date unknown, photograph by Mike Grandmaison / Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

"It was the honour of a lifetime to be able to work with the brilliantly talented and creative Antoine Predock and help make his ambitious and inspiring design for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights come to life. Antoine approached the project with a deep commitment to the concept of human rights. He was equally passionate about never compromising on the quality of the building, always ensuring we respected the vision of the museum's founder, Israel Asper, to reach for the stars and not for mediocrity. Antoine was truly a joy to work with, and I will miss his sense of humour, joie de vivre, and compassionate nature. I think of him every time I see the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and I'm so grateful he decided to enter our architectural competition that fateful day over twenty-one years ago. His museum design has now become an iconic statement of Canada's commitment to the advancement of human rights here and around the world."

> —Gail Asper, OC, OM, LLD, Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel, The Royal Winnipeg Rifles, and Chair, The Asper Foundation

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NORMAN JEWISON, CC, OONT JULY 21, 1926 – JANUARY 20, 2024

Award-winning Canadian filmmaker known for works that address topical social and political issues; founder of the Canadian Film Centre



Film still from Jesus Christ Superstar (1973), courtesy of TIFF.

unknown, photograph by Gail Harvey.

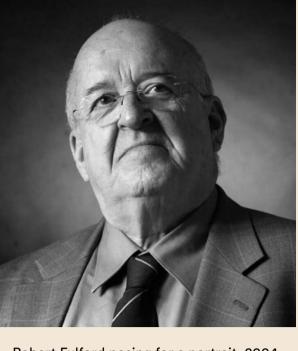
Norman Jewison, date

"Norman was a beautiful mentor to me, and his generosity to new talent was exceptional. He knew that his film *Jesus Christ Superstar* had changed my life when I was in my early teens, and I always had to pinch myself when he told me stories about how he shot this film. I will always treasure a series of personally handwritten cards he sent me over the years whenever one of my films won a prize somewhere. That such a famous and busy film director would always find the time to support the next generation left a huge mark. I miss him dearly."

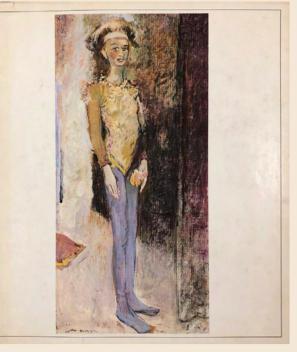
—Atom Egoyan, CC, Award-winning filmmaker

ROBERT FULFORD, OC FEBRUARY 13, 1932 – OCTOBER 15, 2024

Prominent Canadian journalist, magazine editor, essayist, and public intellectual with fulsome experience at the Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, CBC Radio, and more







Cover of *Harold Town Drawings*, with an introduction and text by Robert Fulford (McClelland and Stewart, 1969).

"Bob was the most important art critic in Canada during the crucial period of early nationalism. He managed to resist the two central temptations of that position; he resisted the boosterism that is a natural reaction to the excitement of an emerging scene, and he never rejected Canadian work simply because it wasn't from New York or London. He did not praise artists because he liked them or their success would be 'good for the country.' At the same time, he tried to understand whatever he saw on its own terms. Bob understood that a critic, a true critic, in the full measure of that phrase, is as important to an emerging creative world as any other role, and he performed it without fear or favour. He said what he felt. He wrote what he believed. These are his true achievements and why he was so vital to Canadian art: the hardest thing in the world is to see what's right in front of your eyes. He saw it."

-Stephen Marche, novelist and essayist, son-in-law to Robert Fulford

JOHN LITTLE, RCA FEBRUARY 20, 1928 – OCTOBER 29, 2024

Acclaimed Canadian artist known for capturing the character of working–class neighbourhoods and their residents



John Little, date unknown, courtesy of Alan Klinkhoff Gallery.



John Little, *Rue Beaudry, de la Gauchetière, Montreal*, 1963, courtesy of Alan Klinkhoff Gallery.

"John Little was an important urban artist whom the Klinkhoff family had the good fortune of representing for over sixty-five years. John was humble and self-effacing, with a shyness masked by a memorable sense of humour. The magic of his art is how he could make the most prosaic street quietly, and almost mysteriously, compelling. Its importance is that beginning in the 1950s, uniquely among Canadian artists, Little set out to conserve in paint what has become a rich visual archive of streets and neighbourhoods that were under assault by the then-popular policies of urban renewal and suburbanization armed with the power of eminent domain. Little's paintings serve as a metaphor for neighbourhoods throughout North America."

-Alan Klinkhoff, Alan Klinkhoff Gallery, Montreal and Toronto

TOM FORRESTALL, CM, ONS, RCA MARCH 11, 1936 – NOVEMBER 15, 2024

Leading realist painter from Nova Scotia who studied with Alex Colville at Mount Allison University



Tom Forrestall, date unknown,

photograph by Brian Mackay / CBC.



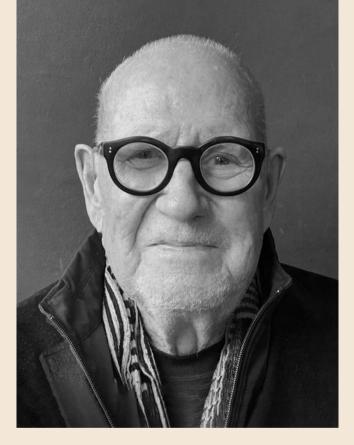
Tom Forrestall, *The Dramatic Entrance*, 1985–August 2011, courtesy of Mira Godard Gallery, Toronto.

"Tom Forrestall always painted, in both his signature egg tempera and in watercolour. In fact, I saw him a week before his death, and he had a watercolour on the go. He was always looking at the world, recording it, processing it, and filtering it through his own intellect. Despite being a realist painter—a genre usually, and often unfairly, depicted as conservative—Tom was a fearless innovator. His shaped paintings were unique in Canadian art, wildly inventive, and often surprising. The rectangle is just one shape among many, Tom would say, and one of the least interesting. One just has to look at any of his shaped paintings to see that he had a point."

-Ray Cronin, author, curator and Director of Curatorial Programs, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton

DUNCAN CHASSIN DE KERGOMMEAUX, RCA JULY 15, 1927 – OCT 24, 2024

B.C.-born and Ottawa-based artist and art teacher



Duncan Chassin de Kergommeaux, date unknown, courtesy of The London Free Press.



Duncan Chassin de Kergommeaux, *Enduring Markers*, 1982-1992, in front of Claude Monet's tombstone, 1840-1926, village churchyard, Giverny, France.

The career of painter and professor Duncan de Kergommeaux encompassed seventy-three years, fifty solo exhibitions and one hundred group exhibitions. Change was his hallmark; one constant was making marks on canvas in thick, vigorous, visible strokes. He worked in series—from abstract to non-figurative to representational—that featured grids, squares, cows, lakes, oceans, maple leaves or landscapes. He was not carved in stone. From 1982–1992, de Kergommeaux searched in France for the graves of forty-five artists, including Matisse, his favorite. He photographed the tombstones, after placing a "bouquet" of four paintbrushes loaded with red, yellow, blue and green paint. The Enduring Markers photographs were exhibited in 1992 at Forest City Gallery in London, Ontario, along with three tombstones, one of which now marks his own grave.

-Judith Rodger, art historian and author

ANNA BANANA

FEBRUARY 24, 1940 – NOVEMBER 29, 2024

B.C.-based artist whose creative production encompassed mail art,

performance art, and writing



Anna Banana at the Ex Postal Facto mail art conference in San Francisco, 2014, photograph by Parker

Higgins.



Tom Shandel, HP (Hank Bull and Patrick Ready), Anna Banana, Dr. Brute, Mr. Peanut, and others participate in the first BC Open Art Race, 1974, Vancouver Art Gallery Photography Archives.

"We are slowly losing significant members of a generation of artists who were bold and determined in their resistance to the status quo. In Anna Banana's case, she paired politics with a strong sense of humour throughout her creative endeavours."

-Daina Augaitis, Chief Curator Emerita, Vancouver Art Gallery

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Race, 1974. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery Photography Archives.