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**A WORTHY PLACE IN THE ART OF OUR COUNTRY:
THE WOMEN'S ART ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
1887-1987**

by

Allison Thompson, B.A. (Honours)

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Institute of Canadian Studies**

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

14 August 1989

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Abstract

The Women's Art Association of Canada was organized in 1887 to provide mutual help and encouragement to women artists in the face of exclusion from full participation in existing educational and professional art institutions. Formally incorporated as a national organization in 1892, the WAAC established a wide range of programs to meet the diverse needs of its membership. These included the art and handicraft clubs which provided instruction, studio facilities, equipment and employment opportunities. As well, the exhibition program broke new ground through its diversity and responsiveness to the demands of artists and the public. Given the breadth of its activity, it is astounding that there has been no serious documentation or assessment of the WAAC's contribution, and as such, it has been largely excluded from mainstream Canadian art history. An examination of the WAAC's activities during the past century clearly demonstrates that the Association had a far reaching impact on women artists and the Canadian public.

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Abbreviations

AAM	Art Association of Montreal
AAS	Associated Artists' School of Art and Design
AGO	Art Gallery of Ontario (1966-present)
AGT	Art Gallery of Toronto (1920-1966)
AMT	Art Museum of Toronto (1911-1919)
ARCA	Associate of the Royal Canadian Academy
BHH	Beaver Hill Hall Group
CGP	Canadian Group of Painters
CNE	Canadian National Exhibition
NAC	National Archives of Canada
NCWC	National Council of Women of Canada
NGC	National Gallery of Canada
NYASL	New York Art Students' League
OSA	Ontario Society of Artists
OSAD	Ontario School of Art and Design
RA	Royal Academy
RCA	Royal Canadian Academy
SFA	Society of Female Artists
TASL	Toronto Art Students League
WAAC	Women's Art Association of Canada (Woman's Art Club 1890-92, Lyceum Club and Women's Art Association after 1930)
WIAC	Women's International Art Club

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Introduction

The great purpose of the [Women's Art] Association is...to kindle and keep alive the artistic impulse of the country, to stimulate worth artistic production, and by united study and effort, to attain as women a worthy place in the Art of our country.

- Mary Ella Dignam (1)

In 1987, the Women's Art Association of Canada (WAAC) celebrated its Centennial, an event which was ceremoniously observed by its members, but passed without remark from the Canadian art establishment. Founded seven years after the Royal Canadian Academy and six years before the National Council of Women of Canada, the WAAC is one of this country's oldest surviving national cultural organizations. Yet the contribution of the WAAC to both Canadian art and to women artists has remained virtually undocumented.

The WAAC was established in 1887, at a time when a burgeoning liberal feminist consciousness was giving form to an organized movement in which concerns for women's education and employment opportunities were central. Faced with the discriminatory policies of the Royal Canadian Academy which restricted women's participation, the WAAC was organized under the capable leadership of Mary Ella Dignam to provide female artists with support and encouragement. United by a common desire to improve the social and moral tone of the

country, the WAAC joined with the National Council of Women of Canada to promote art as an educative force.

Towards these ends, the WAAC initiated a wide range of activities including an extensive exhibition program which served to educate artists and the public about current artistic developments, and presented women's art and handicrafts outside the restrictions of the patriarchal exhibiting societies. The WAAC also organized various clubs to meet the particular needs of its members, and provided women artists with studio space, equipment, and instruction, as well as employment opportunities.

The aim of this thesis is to explore and document the history of the WAAC, to assess its significance to the development of Canadian art, and to analyze the reasons for its exclusion from art historical literature in Canada. Given the breadth of its activities, it is astounding to discover that there has been no serious documentation or assessment of the WAAC's contribution (2). A review of Canadian art historical texts reveals only brief references to the WAAC, which generally pronounce the Association's contribution to be insignificant or negligible. Such references, unsubstantiated by analysis of fact, fail to accurately present the WAAC's many significant accomplishments.

For example, in his standard Canadian art historical

text, Painting in Canada: a history, (2nd ed. 1977) author J. Russell Harper devotes only three sentences to the WAAC in over 350 pages of text. While this is significantly more coverage than in most books on Canadian art, he adopts a snide and condescending tone in a critique of one exhibition held in the early twentieth century and thus dismisses decades of important WAAC activity.

Mary Ellen (sic) Dignam, regarded as the Queen City's art connoisseur and herself a painter, headed the Canadian Women's Art Association. This organization, dedicated to improvement of public taste, sponsored an exhibition by Mauve and other Dutch artists whose imported canvases are now deservedly forgotten. Her own birch trees were as brown and foreign to the true Canadian character as the imports which she so much admired (3).

Dennis Reid, in his text, A Concise History of Canadian Painting, only mentions the WAAC as the venue for painter Jack Bush's first public exhibition in 1944 (4). Charles Hill's Canadian Painting in the Thirties, while dealing with a period of significant activity at the WAAC, says only that "the Women's Art Association organized regular exhibitions, being especially effective in sponsoring the work of women artists from across Canada"(5).

In a recent exhibition catalogue which reclaims two significant Canadian women artists, Kathleen Munn and Edna Taçon, who were all but obliterated from art historical texts, curator Joyce Zemans notes that the accepted art historical literature has tended to exclude those artists who

were not central to what has been defined as mainstream developments; artists whose work was pluralistic or diverse in character. Yet in her summary of the Canadian art environment of the early twentieth century, she dismisses the WAAC with the often repeated assessment that the Association "lay outside mainstream Canadian art history"(6). It is ironic that both Munn and Taçon held solo exhibitions at the WAAC, although Zemans does not mention this.

This is a vicious cycle: the WAAC is not documented in existing literature because it is assumed to lie outside mainstream art history; and it is assumed to lie outside mainstream art history because no one has bothered to document it. Another reason for the WAAC's exclusion from the established art historical literature lies in the assumption that documentation does not exist. In The Obstacle Race, which examines the restrictions encountered by women artists, Germaine Greer acknowledges that the lack of available documentation on women's organizations leads to confusion:

whether the Women's Art Club of Canada is the same or distinct from the Women's Art Association of Canada, is no more to be taken for granted than what the Ladies' Art Club of Glasgow might have in common with the Women's Art Club of New York (7).

She then concludes, "It is not now easy to trace their development and decline or the degree of success they had in pursuing their aims, for their documentation seems to have

perished" (8). Fortunately, much of the original WAAC documentation does indeed exist.

The majority of available information on the WAAC is contained in their annual reports which were published from 1889, and refer to the major events in each year, although often omitting detail. When available, WAAC exhibition catalogues published during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provide additional information. Newspaper articles and reviews are another record of WAAC activities which reveal the extent of public awareness and interest. These have been gathered in scrapbooks by WAAC members over the years and are located at the WAAC building in Toronto. Collectively, these are the primary sources of information on the WAAC. Although annual reports and newspaper clippings are by nature, brief and summary, frequently failing to provide complete details of events, they do indicate the great range of the WAAC's activities and the importance both to women artists and to the general art public.

Further sources of related material can be garnered from the biographies of individual artists who were WAAC members and/or exhibitors. The interest in women artists has grown significantly since the early 1970s. Linda Nochlin's feminist challenge to patriarchal art history, "Why have

there been no great women artists?", was followed by exhibitions such as Harris and Nochlin's Women Artists: 1550-1950, and Farr and Luckyj's From Women's Eyes: Women Painters in Canada. Several recent exhibitions have produced valuable catalogues documenting such twentieth century women artists as Prudence Heward (Luckyj, 1986), Frances Loring and Florence Wyle (Boyanoski, 1987), Emily Coonan (Karen Antaki, 1987), and Kathleen Munn and Edna Taçon (Zemans, 1988). Nineteenth century Canadian women artists are less well documented, but forthcoming studies of Charlotte Schreiber and Frances Anne Hopkins will begin to redress the situation. The greatest lack of research is in the area of women's participation in handicrafts. However, the recent publication on the work of ceramist Alice Egan-Hagan (Elwood, 1984) reveals not only that the documentation exists, but that this underdeveloped area of study can reveal significant aspects of the history of Canadian women artists.

Chapter One provides a brief overview of the relationship between women artists and the educational and professional art institutions in the nineteenth century, focusing on how female participation was restricted and, in some instances, prohibited. It will further illustrate how these and other conditions subsequently led women in Europe and North America to form their own organizations where they could work and

exhibit. This serves to establish a context for the formation of the Women's Art Association of Canada and sets out the major issues with which it would be confronted.

Chapter Two chronicles the formation and early development of the WAAC. It commences with a profile of Mary Ella Dignam, the founder and first president of the WAAC, whose personal vision and will served as the greatest guiding force in determining the course of the organization. The chapter then documents the development from an informal group of young women to a national organization which operated exhibition programs, lectures and special interest clubs. The WAAC's concerns with social and national issues will place it in the context of the NCWC and the Women's Club Movement.

Chapter Three explores the role of the WAAC in the revival of handicrafts in the late nineteenth century. A brief survey of the Arts and Crafts Movement in both Britain and the United States, and the role played by women artists and artisans provides a context for the WAAC's extensive handicraft program which includes production, exhibition and promotion.

Chapter Four examines the WAAC during the early years of the twentieth century, with particular focus on internationalism and professionalism. The extraordinary role played by founder Mary Ella Dignam will be documented in

light of her special interest in the Foreign Picture Exhibitions which offered Canadian audiences the rare chance to view works by professional European artists.

Chapter Five documents the shift from internationalism to nationalism during the First and Second World Wars. An examination of this period of the WAAC's greatest activity and most ambitious exhibition program will establish the WAAC's leading role in the promotion of nationalism and modernism.

A final assessment of the importance of the contribution of the WAAC will seek to begin the redress of current marginalization of the Association's role in Canadian art history.

ENDNOTES

1. Women's Art Association of Canada (WAAC), Annual Report 1897-98, p. 6.
2. A short history of the WAAC was written by member, Florence Deeks in 1912 on the occasion of the Association's twenty-fifth anniversary, and published in the annual report that year, but this was for private circulation only: Florence Deeks, "Historical Sketch of the Women's Art Association of Canada", in WAAC, Annual Report 1911-12, pp. 1-8.
3. J. Russell Harper, A Concise History of Canadian Painting, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), p. 225.
4. Dennis Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 254. According to a WAAC notice of annual events (WAAC, Scrapbook 5), Jack Bush exhibited at the WAAC in October 1945.
5. Charles Hill, Canadian Painting in the Thirties (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1975), p. 13.
6. Joyce Zemans et al, New Perspectives on Modernism in Canada - Kathleen Munn, Edna Tacon (Toronto: Art Gallery of York University, 1988), p. 8.
7. Germaine Greer, The Obstacle Race (Great Britain: Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd, 1979), p. 359, n. 35.
8. Greer, p. 321.

Chapter One

Inclusion and Exclusion:

Women Artists and Nineteenth Century Art Organizations

Deprived of encouragements, educational facilities, and rewards, it is almost incredible that even a small percentage of women actually sought a profession in the arts. - Linda Nochlin (1).

The above quotation is from Linda Nochlin's now classic essay, "Why have there been no great women artists?" (1971), which has been credited as being "the first feminist challenge...levied at the history of art" (2). In considering this question, Nochlin warns that the first reaction is "to swallow the question as it is put: to dig up examples of insufficiently appreciated women artists throughout history" (3); yet she contends that there are no female equivalents for the traditionally acclaimed Great Masters such as Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Cezanne, or Picasso. Instead, she urges us to examine the conditions for producing art, including social, educational, and institutional. Nochlin began unveiling the blatant discrimination against women found in all of these areas and concluded that "it was indeed 'institutionally' impossible for women to achieve excellence or success on the same footing as men, no matter what their talent, or genius"; that what was surprising was

not that there were no 'great women artists', but that women had achieved in art at all (4).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, women artists throughout the western world responded to the persistent discrimination which had confronted them by forming their own organizations. One such example is the Women's Art Association of Canada (WAAC), established in Toronto at the end of the nineteenth century with the intent of offering to women artists a place to meet, work, and exhibit. The WAAC organized classes, lectures, and exhibitions, and stressed mutual help and encouragement at a time when opportunities were limited for women involved in the arts. In order to understand why the WAAC was established and how it developed, it is necessary first to examine the social, educational, and institutional context for nineteenth century women artists. Chapter One provides a brief overview of the relationship between women artists and major art schools and academies in England, France, and America. Focus will be placed on the rules and regulations of these institutions which restricted or even prohibited women's inclusion. It will further illustrate how these and other conditions subsequently led women to form their own schools and organizations. A discussion of art organizations and schooling in Canada will set the stage for the formation of the Women's Art Association of Canada.

Before 1800, most women who had made names for themselves as artists were related to better-known male artists (5). Unless a woman was born into a family which ran a workshop or studio, there was very little access to anything approaching professional art training. Beginning in the eighteenth century, painting became an increasingly popular 'accomplishment' for young ladies from the middle and upper classes. Watercolour, which was compact, convenient, and delicate in effect, became the preferred medium for the majority of amateur women painters and popular subjects included still-lives (particularly flower studies), landscapes, and portraits (6). With its rapid growth in popularity, watercolour painting soon became a mandatory part of every young lady's education. In her investigation of female education in 1799, Hannah More found that the study of fine arts was forced upon young ladies with or without talent, "fashion having swallowed up that distinction". She further asserted that such students introduced into the world as 'accomplished young ladies' were in reality accomplished in nothing (7).

The prevalence of this stereotype of the fashionable lady amateur painter made it increasingly difficult for women to establish themselves as serious artists; social convention dictated that 'accomplishment art' be confined to the level

of mediocrity, whatever the skill of a work or ambition of the individual artist (8). For example, Mrs. Ellis' widely read The Family Monitor and Domestic Guide, published in 1844, advised women that it was of infinitely more value to be able to do a great many things tolerably well, than to devote oneself to and excel in any one. Mrs. Ellis found painting, and especially drawing to be a particularly good undertaking, with advantages over music since it was quiet and disturbed no one. Moreover,

it is, of all other occupations, the one most calculated to keep the mind from brooding upon self, and to maintain that general cheerfulness which is a part of social and domestic duty... It can also be laid down and resumed, as circumstances or inclination may direct, and that without any serious loss (9).

Female accomplishments in art were to appear effortless, as if the ability had been acquired with great ease and they were certainly not to interfere with domestic duties or obligations. The results for women were twofold: attempts to devote serious or dedicated effort to the study of art were discouraged; and they became indelibly associated with amateur and mediocre art.

Reviews and other writings on art throughout the period reflected a conviction that the distinction between professional and amateur artists was an important one to make. When reviewing Clayton's English Female Artists (1876), one critic wrote:

...What constitutes an artist, and where are we to draw the line, especially in the case of women, between an artist and an amateur? The rough-and-ready money test, though the most obvious, is, after all, the least reliable, for the veriest dauber may sell his or her paintings, when a true artist may never gain a penny from the discerning public. But if all the fine ladies who have ever dabbled in oil painting, in conjunction with fancy work and paper flowers, are to go down to posterity as Female Artists, we shall be more puzzled than ever to discover the right application of the word! (10)

The term 'amateur' continued to connote the artist who did not earn a living from art, yet it also carried an implied assumption of inferior quality. Because women were discouraged from aspiring to and obtaining professional careers or from actively selling their work, most women regardless of ability were associated with amateur status and thereby inferior quality. The confused rationale seems to be that if the art was good, it could be sold, but since women were not supposed to sell their work it was inferior.

There existed a widespread belief that a woman could not be an artist; that the two were mutually exclusive. The English critic, John Ruskin, wrote to an aspiring female painter, "You must resolve to be quite a great paintress; the feminine termination does not exist, there never having been such a being as yet as a lady who could paint. Try and be the first..." (11). Ruskin's assertion that the past provides no evidence of female artists was often put forward during the mid nineteenth century to defend and substantiate inequities in the art world (12). In his dubious attempt to

encourage this aspiring artist, Ruskin holds out for her only the lesser title of 'paintress', separated and removed from the realm of 'painter' which, as Ruskin defends, is by precedent, exclusively male. Despite strong social pressures, several women did become successful professional artists, yet all too frequently, they were regarded as being less womanly (13).

Art instruction for young women acquired a practical purpose as well; it provided training to those in need of employment. Articles written during the mid and late nineteenth century expressed fears over the growing number of unmarried women, especially upper and middle class women, who were forced to support themselves (14). One of the few acceptable occupations for these gentlewomen was that of teacher or governess. There were also new opportunities for women within the design industry, which was rapidly expanding due to the revived interest in arts and crafts. China painting, pottery, and commercial art were areas deemed particularly suited to women (15).

As increasing numbers of women contemplated employment in the design industry, the demand for training rose. In 1843, the Female School of Design was opened in London to enable young women "to obtain an honourable and profitable employment" (16). Here, young women studied design for

various purposes including engraving and porcelain painting. The objectives clearly stated that the school did not provide training in 'accomplishment art', a clear indication of the distinction made between commercial applied art and fashionable amateurism (17). Similar schools were established elsewhere in Europe and in the United States. For example, the Philadelphia School of Design for Women was opened in 1844 by Sarah Worthington Peter, specifically with a view to providing employment-related training in engraving, illustration, textile design, furniture carving, and other trades (18). The limited art training received at these schools was aimed at the demands of the industry; it was not intended to meet the needs of the fashion for accomplishment art nor prepare women as professional artists.

The schools established by the national academies were considered best able to produce professional artists. The French Académie Royale, founded in 1648, and the British Royal Academy (RA), founded in 1768 both established rigid standards which served to enforce and promote the officially approved style of the time. A compulsory curriculum in practice and theory maintained the 'academic style' (19).

Although the British RA Schools did not initially prohibit the enrolment of women, they did not apply and custom soon became law (20). It was not until the first half of the nineteenth century, that the question of the admission

of women resulted in heated debates and protests. The RA maintained its male-only status until 1860 when Laura Herford sent in qualifying drawings signed only as 'L. Herford'. The acceptance, addressed to 'L. Herford Esq.', proved that the work of female students was equal to the standard acceptable for admission. As a result of this ingenious circumvention of the rules, the RA was persuaded to admit women to the Schools. In 1861, four more female students were admitted, another six in 1862, and three more in 1863. In the same year, the RA imposed a limit of thirteen on female admissions, citing lack of space. Although this ruling was relaxed six years later when the RA Schools were extended, the numbers of female students remained far below that of males (21). More significantly, those few women who were accepted by the RA were denied an equal education since they were barred from attending the vitally important life classes which featured the nude model (22). From the Renaissance through the nineteenth century, a prolonged and rigorous study of the male nude model was an essential part of academic history painting, long considered the highest category of painting and the means by which to measure the true virtuosity of the painter. History painting presented full-scale human figures in action. Drawing from the live nude model followed after exhaustive exercises in copying from engravings and antique plaster casts. The exclusion of

women from life classes was of fundamental significance:

To be deprived of this ultimate state of training meant to be deprived of the possibility of creating major art - or simply, as with most of the few women aspiring to be painters, to be restricted to the 'minor' and less highly regarded fields of portraiture, genre, landscape, or still-life" (23).

A few smaller art schools which were open to women were often more liberal in their teaching. One example is Dickinson's Academy in London which, during the 1850s, became the first art school to admit female students on equal terms with men. Here, both men and women could study from the nude without any other formalities beyond the payment of fees (24). Such opportunities were the exception and in general, women did not have access to life classes. The smaller schools could not match the level of instruction provided at the larger academies, nor could they bestow upon their graduates the same professional acceptability. Despite continued efforts by female students to obtain equal rights within the British academic system, the RA was unyielding. In January 1872, twenty-two female students at the RA signed a Memorial asking the Council to "establish a separate school under given restrictions where female artists should have the advantage of studying from the nude model as is afforded to the male students in the Life School" (25). The request was unanimously declined. Thirty-one years later, in 1903, a life class for females was finally established at the RA and other classes which had been segregated were now integrated.

Nevertheless, the prevailing Victorian morality stipulated that "however beautiful the body might be, it was to be hidden as a thing of shame", so that only the very boldest women were able to take advantage of these opportunities and thereby progress in their work (26). The pressures of social conventions could often be more restrictive than the discriminating regulations of the Academy.

In France, women artists were faced with similar problems. They were encouraged to enter areas of design including fashion, home decoration, and industrial art (27) but those who wished to pursue a professional career in fine art encountered discrimination and exclusion. The normal male training process involved study at a private atelier to prepare for admission to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the school of the Académie Royale. This practice was impossible for women since the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and even the majority of ateliers did not permit the attendance of women (28).

Good instruction in fine art for women had to be obtained privately, often at considerable expense. The Académie Julian was one of the few places where a woman could receive "anything approaching a serious education" (29). It began admitting women shortly after it opened in 1868. By 1877 women were allowed to study from the nude figure during certain hours of the day and in 1880 they could work from

life all day long, as the men did. But there were several complaints from students over discriminatory practices within the academy, including the insufficient number of teachers and poor quality of models available to female students (30).

The Académie Julian soon became a mecca for foreign women, particularly Americans (31). Throughout the nineteenth century, Paris was the centre of the art world, and most women from North America, as well as England and other countries, like their male peers, journeyed to France to pursue their art studies. The Académie Julian along with the similar Académie Colarossi, were two of the most respected schools, but large numbers of women also entered smaller private studios. Indeed, by the end of the century, women often made up the majority of the classes in the smaller French ateliers (32).

As in England, although the Ecole des Beaux-Arts did not expressly prohibit entrance of women, their exclusion had become "une question de principe absolu" (33). Following a decade of resolute campaigning led by sculptor Madame Leon Bertaux and painter Virginie Demont-Breton, French women were finally admitted to the Ecole in 1897, and to life classes in 1900. Three years later, in 1903, women were declared eligible for the prestigious Prix de Rome, the highest honour at the Ecole, which afforded artists the opportunity to

travel to Rome to study monuments from antiquity as well as the masters of the Renaissance. Such a trip was of immense importance in an artist's development, particularly during the Neo-classical period (c.1770-c.1830) when it was accepted practice that a serious artist would not only have studied these works but also could make reference to them in history paintings. It was during the same period that a rigorous study of the male nude had its greatest significance. Ironically, by the time women achieved eligibility and acceptance, academic art was on the wain (34). As was often the case, by the time concessions to women were made, the inherent power and significance of the initial demand had been lost - too little, too late.

In the United States, art academies were quicker to institute equality in education. The Pennsylvania Academy, founded in 1805, admitted women students as early as 1844. Initially women were only allowed to draw from nude plaster casts in segregated classes. The first ladies' life class, held in 1868, used only female nude models. The male nude was officially introduced into the ladies' class in 1877, although the rules stipulated that the model be discreetly draped (35). Nevertheless, this was a very advanced step for the times, more than two decades before the British and French academies permitted women to work from the male nude,

and the Pennsylvania Academy was frequently attacked by outraged citizens for its liberal actions. One concerned American wrote to the academy's director in 1882:

Does it pay for a young lady of a refined, godly household to be urged as the only way of obtaining knowledge of true art, to enter a class where every feeling of maidenly delicacy is violated, where she becomes...so familiar with the persons of degraded women and the sight of nude males, that no possible art can restore her lost treasure of chaste and delicate thoughts!...The stifling heat of the room adds to the excitement, and what could be a cool unimpassioned study in a room at 35 [degrees], at 85 [degrees] or even higher is dreadful (36).

The National Academy in New York had admitted some women students to its Antique School to draw from plaster casts as early as 1831, but women were not enrolled on a regular basis until 1846. Women were admitted to life classes in 1871 although they could not attend anatomy lectures until 1914. A number of smaller art schools established in the second half of the century were even more open in their approach to teaching and the opportunities they afforded to women. In 1875, the New York Art Students League (NYASL) was organized by a group of students in reaction to the more conservative National Academy. The NYASL did not have a set course of studies; instead students attended classes of their choice. The school took a more liberal attitude toward women from the beginning and included women on its governing board. In the expanding Midwest, new co-educational art schools such as the Cincinnati Art Academy, the St. Louis Art Academy, and the

Art Institute of Chicago also offered women equal educational opportunities (37).

The struggle for women to achieve adequate, if not equal, art education was arduous and prolonged; the battle to achieve equality within professional associations was even slower in coming. At the time of their founding, the official academies in France and England both admitted women members, although women did not enjoy the full privileges granted male members. Specific restrictions differed somewhat in each academy, but both refused to allow women to teach, compete for prizes, or hold office (38). This exclusion became absolute in both the French and English academies when women were completely barred from full membership in 1789 and 1819 respectively. These decisions gave official approval to the long held view that women were incapable of equalling the best of their male contemporaries.

In order to examine why the French and English academies altered their policies regarding female members, it is necessary to trace more specifically, the chain of events which led to their exclusion. In 1648, the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in Paris was established with a most liberal statement of intention from Louis XIV, declaring that the Academy should be open to all gifted artists regardless of gender (39). The first woman to be admitted

was Catherine Duchemin in 1663, and by 1682, six more women had enrolled (40). But in 1706, the Academy declared that no more women could be admitted; presumably as a result of the increasing conservatism of the aging Louis XIV, as well as a feeling among male members that the presence of several amateur women lowered the prestige of the institution (41). Despite the 1706 restriction, a select few women were elected full Academicians during the eighteenth century. The Italian painter, Rosalba Carriera, became a member during her triumphal visit to Paris in 1720, although her return to Venice removed any real female presence in the Academy. In 1722, another foreigner, the Dutch flower painter Margareta Haverman was elected, only to be expelled one year later after the Academy accused her of submitting a work by her teacher, Jan van Huysum, as her reception piece (42). The Academy became, once again, a male enclave until the election of miniature painter, Marie Thérèse Reboul in 1757. This marked only the second time in seventy-five years that a French woman had been so honoured, although her marriage to the Academician, Joseph Marie Vien is credited in part with her successful election (43). A decade later, another painter, Anna Dorothea Lisiewska-Therbusch of Berlin was granted membership. The majority of women elected were either international celebrities or wives of Academicians, and as such they were seen as being exceptional, rather than

representative of the growing acceptance of women as professional artists.

By 1770, with the election of Anne Vallayer-Coster and the pastel portraitist Marie Suzanne Giroust, the number of female Academicians reached four. This apparent contradiction of the rule forbidding the election of women was settled by establishing a maximum limit of four women members. This was a double-edged gesture; the Academy was "pleased to encourage talent among women by admitting a few to membership [but] these admissions, nevertheless, foreign in some way to its constitution, must not become too numerous" (44). This decree restricted not only the number of female members, but ensured that they would still be limited in privileges and responsibilities including specific prohibitions on teaching or holding office. In fact, the only real advantage women artists received as members of the Académie Royale was permission to exhibit in the prestigious annual Salons.

In 1783 (after the deaths of both Giroust-Roslin and Lisiewska-Therbusch) Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun and Adélaïde Labille-Guiard were made Academicians but they were to be the last women so honoured for a very long time. Seven years later, Labille-Guiard proposed that the restriction to four female Academicians be abolished, declaring that "an indeterminate number of women members was the only admissible

number" (45). But Labille-Guiard presented an ultimately conservative position which argued that since female Academicians were deprived of power and responsibilities, they should be admitted with the honorary rank of 'conseilleurs' with the sole privilege of exhibiting in the Salons. These proposals passed with the paradoxical result that at the moment the Salons were opened to women, they became ineligible for membership as Academicians. Presumably, Labille-Guiard's reasoning was that it was of greater practical value to the majority of women artists to exhibit in the Salons than to become powerless Academicians with only partial rights. Throughout the nineteenth century, women were barred from membership, but they comprised one third of the artists exhibiting in the annual Salons (46). Yet to deny all women the prestige inherent in the rank of Academician upheld the established patriarchal belief that women could not be ranked with the foremost artists of the time.

However discriminatory the practices towards women, the French Académie Royale was a far more liberal institution than the British Royal Academy. Two women artists, Angelica Kauffmann and Mary Moser, were founding members when the RA was established in 1768. They would be the only women to receive this rank until the twentieth century. Like their

counterparts in the Académie Royale, Kauffmann and Moser did not enjoy many of the privileges granted to male Academicians. One telling illustration of their exclusion is Johann Zoffany's depiction of The Academicians of the Royal Academy (fig. 1), painted in 1772. For this official group portrait, the academicians chose to be represented in a life class, studying from the male nude model, even though they were fully aware that two of the academicians would have to be excluded from the group. Kauffmann and Moser are represented by portraits which hang on the wall behind the male nude model - a most ironic illustration, indicative of the exclusive nature of the Royal Academy.

Although not specifically barred from participation in the business functions at the Royal Academy, it was considered improper for women to attend meetings and for this reason they were required to vote in absentia. Towards the end of her life Mary Moser did occasionally attend meetings of the Royal Academicians which undoubtedly caused her colleagues some consternation. After her death in 1819, women were excluded from membership, a decision which was not reversed until well into the twentieth century. Numerous writings and press reviews from the nineteenth century indicate that there was no lack of women artists eligible for Academical status (47). But, even the internationally acclaimed history painter Elizabeth Thompson (later Butler),

who was proposed and almost elected for membership in 1879, was not able to exert power to change the ruling.

In 1922, Annie Louisa Swynnerton became an Associate Member of the Royal Academy (ARA) and in 1936, Laura Knight became only the third female in the history of the RA to be elected a full Academician (48). During the intervening years a number of women became Honorary Members, but it has been suggested that such titles were purchased since these women were not elected and did not receive any rights or responsibilities (49).

It would appear that the RA's decision to bar women from membership was not a reflection of their abilities as painters. Kauffmann and Moser had earned reputations equal to most of their peers in the RA and were welcomed as members at the time of its founding. Women were barred on the grounds of social propriety and convention: it was considered improper, if not indecent, for a woman to study from a male nude model as her male peers did; it was not acceptable for an unchaperoned woman to attend predominantly male business meetings, and it was certainly inappropriate for her to express a contradictory opinion (50). The RA would not consider making the concessions demanded by women, and for the sake of harmony and propriety within the Academy, women were barred from membership. This will be discussed further in this Chapter in relation to a similar decision taken by

the Royal Canadian Academy.

It is clear from this brief history that women artists were excluded from the full range of privileges and opportunities afforded to male art students and professionals; and even when minor concessions were granted, they affected only a small proportion of women.

Exclusion within and from educational and professional institutions were not the only obstacles faced by women artists. Social conventions and gender based stereotypes also served to exclude women from the realm of the serious artist. Throughout the nineteenth century, the majority of women who studied, produced, and exhibited art did so as amateurs, and invariably, the amateur exhibitions showed more female work than male (51). The majority of these works were watercolours so that this medium became associated with women and amateurism. While amateur watercolour painting had been popular with British military artists during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, by the mid 1800s, its association with women was so pervasive that it was sometimes judged to be an unsuitable hobby for men. In his book, Watercolour Painting in Britain (1968), Martin Hardie wrote:

After 1850...grown men found dabbling with colours on a piece of paper incompatible with a sense of their own dignity. Leisure could be better spent on sport or courtship, on the reading of newspapers and

scientific journals, on experimental science itself, on travel, billiards, literary compositions, and, most important of all, in serious converse away from the ladies (52).

In addition to the solitary and delicate nature of the medium, the author implies that factors which make watercolour painting an undignified hobby for men include its association with women.

It was popularly believed that while females may have possessed a sense of decoration or beauty, they lacked reason, invention, and genius, and for these reasons they were better suited to subjects that were more imitative than inventive (53). Women were instructed to paint those subjects deemed most appropriate for them, particularly portraits, landscapes, and still-lives. When women did depict figurative compositions, they were often genre scenes depicting everyday life and centred around female figures and/or children. The scenes, usually intimate or sentimental in nature, included popular themes of love, courtship and marriage, motherhood and widowhood, which centred on typical female experiences found within a woman's traditional sphere, the home. Such subjects had been officially declared by the national academies as being of lesser importance than historical subjects.

But this restrictive designation of certain media and/or subjects as 'amateur' is refuted by the fact that the growing number of professional women artists successfully employed

them. Indeed, women contributed more portraits, landscapes and still-lives to British exhibitions than any other clearly defined category. And at the British Royal Academy, women exhibited more portraits than any other class of work (54). Women typically painted smaller, more modest pictures, meant for the private patron and private home, and these subjects--portraits, landscapes, still-lives, and intimate figurative scenes--were best suited for that purpose: "To paint for the market is obviously to paint within established prejudices, and when female artists especially violated those prejudices, they would simply not find patrons." (55)

Classical or historical subjects were considered to be the most prestigious, elevated subject, but they never constituted more than a small proportion of the total works produced by women (56). The unavailability of the necessary academic training made the production of history paintings virtually impossible. There were rare instances, such as a series of large-scale history paintings of battle-scenes painted in the 1870s by Elizabeth Thompson, which brought her public and critical popularity, although as mentioned earlier, it could not gain her entrance into the RA. And even when a woman artist did conform to the highest academic standards, the prevailing prejudices regarding gender overruled any rational aesthetic evaluation of the work. Ruskin, who sixteen years earlier boldly proclaimed an

absolute dearth of women painters, now points to his own hesitation when confronted with one of Thompson's battle scenes, The Roll Call (1874):

I never approached a picture with more iniquitous prejudice against it than I did Miss Thompson's: partly because I have always said that no woman could paint: and secondly, because I thought, what the public made such a fuss about must be good for nothing... (57)

Thompson's painting challenged male views such as Ruskin's and confounded established ideas about women's art.

Less than a decade later, Ruskin was over-compensating for his earlier biased judgements with patronizing flattery. Referring to painters Francesca Alexander and Lilian Trotter, he wrote:

For a long time I used to say, in all my elementary books, that except in a graceful and minor way, women could not paint or draw. I am beginning, lately, to bow myself to the much more delightful conviction that nobody else can (58).

Such frivolous praise of women artists was common during the late nineteenth century, "compliment [being] the recognized commerce between the sexes" (59). But false flattery denied women artists direct and accurate criticism of their work and belittled their achievements. Although Ruskin was constantly contradicting himself throughout his career, his shifting attitudes echo the changing social perceptions of women artists; from the notion that 'woman' and 'artist' were mutually exclusive, to the recognition of a few,

'exceptional' women artists, to the frivolous and false appraisal of their work. All three served to exclude women from the vocation of the serious artist.

Faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles - limited education opportunities, biased professional exhibiting societies, and social prejudices - some women artists sought alternatives to the traditional male-dominated art institutions by establishing their own independent associations. The late nineteenth century saw the rise of women's art groups throughout Europe and North America. One of the first, the Society of Female Artists (SFA), was founded in London in 1857 in reaction to the exclusion of women artists from the male-dominated art world. The SFA wanted to create an exhibition room where the hierarchies of the patriarchal institutions, including those concerning media and subject-matter, did not exist (60). As such, the membership objected to the judging of their work with the standards of traditional, academic systems from which they were largely excluded. In reviewing their second exhibition in 1858, one sympathetic critic explained this position:

We feel some regret at the tone of comparison adopted by certain contemporaries; a comparison which the Society does not invite, and which is wholly irrelevant so long as the domestic and academical facilities afforded to the female artist are so very far below those of a male student (61).

In 1863, the SFA, initially comprised of professional and

amateur members, opened its own school to assist in the education of women artists. Nine years later the SFA made a significant decision to admit only professional artists as members, although amateur artists could exhibit for a fee. Critics made note of the marked improvement in the quality of the work at the exhibitions which continued to grow in size (62). The decision to become a professional organization reflected the growing number of professional women artists. This was a result of the increased availability of training for women, particularly their inclusion at the RA. Notwithstanding such progress, women still faced inequities within the art world, and problems of reconciling the needs of professionals and amateurs within women's art organizations.

In France, L'Union des Femmes Peintres et Sculpteurs was founded in 1881. Mme. Leon Bertaux organized the society with an assertiveness not seen in the SFA:

Pour réagir contre ces écarts désastreux, promoteurs de décadence, j'ai la foi que l'élément féminin viendrait fort à propos, car la vraie femme, celle qui vit bien, aura toujours à coeur de faire bien penser d'elle; je me demande pourquoi, aussi savante que l'homme, si le pays lui donne les moyens d'étude, elle n'aurait pas pour ainsi dire, son art, art d'un domaine immense, côtoyant de très près celui de l'homme où sa note plus douce, et, je le répète, aussi savante, traitera, avec une autorité particulière, les sujets les plus favorables à l'expression du grand art (63).

The Union's first exhibition contained work by thirty-six

contributors including many of France's foremost women artists. The reviews were most favourable (64). In 1890, the Union established the Journal des Femmes Artistes, in an effort to validate and support female art by creating solidarity among women artists and persuading the public of the necessity of equal educational facilities for women. Bertaux urged fellow women artists to create an art which was true to their own experiences as women:

Restons femmes: au point de vue artistique aussi: ne calquons pas nos maîtres, créons selon notre sentiment. Même avec l'intention de les égaler, ne copions pas les chefs-d'oeuvre; donnons naissance à un art qui portera la marque du génie de notre sexe; restons femmes, restons artistes, restons unies" (65).

Under Bertaux's presidency, one divisive concern emerged: the jury's high selection standard for the annual exhibitions. Some members felt it was too high and that young and inexperienced artists should receive more support. When Bertaux resigned in 1892, the new president, Mme. Demont-Breton vowed that the jury's selection would be more lenient: "Notre devoir est de mettre en lumière les premiers essais de celles qui travaillent sérieusement, et d'attirer à nous toutes les artistes qui par leur talent font honneur à l'art féminin." (66) Subsequent reviews noted a general decline in the standard of the exhibitions and several members who objected to the new leniency in standards left the Union to form their own organization called the Société

des Femmes Artistes (67). Although the exhibitions at the Union continued to expand in size, the reviews were consistently bad. Typical complaints focused on the facts that there was too much amateurishness, too many watercolours, and an excessive number of flower paintings.

The dilemma which faced the Union des Femmes Peintres et Sculpteurs was the same one confronting the Society of Female Artists in England and many other women's art associations. These organizations had dual purposes: to develop and maintain high standards to attract professional women artists; and to encourage those women artists who were not of the same high standards to gain admission to larger mixed exhibitions. But, how compatible were these two mandates? Was it possible both to attempt to rectify the inequities in the art world so that women could achieve professional status on par with men and also maintain a philanthropic desire to encourage those women who deserved a more supportive, less judgmental environment as a result of the low standard of female art education? The compromising result was noted in an 1868 review of the SFA: "Nothing has done so much to lower the credit of this praiseworthy enterprise as the amiable admission of works which could not find a hanging on other walls." (68) A second paradox was that these societies were organized in reaction to the limitations of traditional patriarchal institutions and yet members often found it

necessary, even desirous to seek success in the mainstream art world.

As the professional opportunities for women artists improved, the objectives of these societies changed. Groups such as the Manchester Society of Women Painters (founded in 1879) and its contemporary, the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists' Club (founded in 1882) no longer accepted the prevailing view that women produced work of a lower standard and sought to provide equal educational facilities (69). By the end of the nineteenth century, membership in the Women's International Art Club was restricted to professional women artists who were required as part of the membership qualifications to exhibit in the principal professional exhibitions of their country, either the official Academy, or, if none existed, the main professional exhibition society (See Chapter 4 for further discussion of the Women's International Art Club and the WAAC's involvement).

Women's organizations based on the models in Britain and France were established throughout the western world. In Germany, the Künstlerinnenverein in Berlin ran an art school for women and mounted biennial exhibitions of women's work at which special prizes were awarded (70). Munich and Dresden each established a Künstlerinnenverein and in Austria, women founded the Vienna Verein der Schriftstellerinnen und

Künstlerinnen. In the United States, the first organization for women artists was the Ladies Art Association, founded in New York by wood-engraver Alice Donlevy and modelled after the SFA. The first national organization was not established until 1889; the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors in America had a wide membership and operated its own academies and arranged annual exhibitions (71).

The establishment of these exhibiting societies reflected the pervasive confidence of women artists. Initially, such organizations believed that women artists should exhibit without comparison to male peers since criticisms about the choice of media and subject-matter were irrelevant to the experiences of artists as women. The main challenge lay in trying to reconcile the needs of all women artists, both amateur and professional by establishing an agency independent of the patriarchal art world to serve the needs and gain rightful recognition for women artists.

The examination of inclusion and exclusion of women artists in nineteenth century professional art institutions demonstrates the situation which motivated women artists to form independent organizations. The founding of the Women's Art Association of Canada must be placed within this international context, since the challenges and concerns which had faced these organizations would be the central issues for the WAAC. The Canadian art scene presented women

artists with the additional problems of still being in the early stages of growth.

In order to set the stage for the specific dilemmas facing the formation of the WAAC, a brief presentation of the state of the Canadian art world in the nineteenth century is necessary. "Books there are none, nor music and as to pictures! - the Lord deliver me from such! The people don't know what a picture is." (72) Such was Anna Jameson's view of the Canadian art scene during her brief stay in Toronto in 1836 as the wife of Upper Canada's Attorney General. The city of Toronto had only been incorporated two years earlier in 1834 with a population of 9,252 (73) and artistic patronage was confined to a small circle of privileged government leaders. Steadily increasing immigration from England brought some professional male artists, but also many amateurs, men and women, who had received instruction in drawing and watercolour painting as part of their education. These immigrants brought with them the standards and traditions of their homelands which are reflected by their establishment of art organizations and societies modelled on institutions in Europe and the United States (74).

The first art organization to be established in Toronto and Upper Canada was the Society of Artists and Amateurs,

founded in 1834 (75). An anonymous letter to the editor of the Patriot, published on January 31, 1834 stated that the Society was to be modelled on similar 'local' organizations in Britain and would hold annual exhibitions with the presentation of various awards and prizes (76). Captain Richard Bonnycastle of the Royal Engineers served as president for a membership of seventeen professional and amateur artists, none of whom were women.

Their first and only exhibition opened July 1, 1834 in the Assembly Chamber of the east block of the Parliament Buildings on Front Street. One hundred-and-ninety-six works were exhibited by members and non-members. A published catalogue listed all works by title and the name of the artist. However, in the case of works by female non-members, the artist was identified simply as 'A Lady'. Only eight of the 196 works were executed by women; five were later identified as works by Jemima Howard, wife of architect and painter, John Howard, who served on the founding committee of the Society (77). Jemima Howard's social position was the key to her inclusion; as was traditionally the case for women artists, she was related to a better-known male artist.

Unfortunately, this inaugural exhibition of the Society was unsuccessful and did not capture sufficient public interest. While a recent cholera epidemic may be to blame for

poor attendance, it has also been suggested that cultural interests were not a priority for the public and that the combination of amateur and professional artists simply did not work (78). The Society disbanded less than a year after it was formed.

But this disbandment was not to be a permanent one. In 1847, the organization was reborn as the Toronto Society of Arts. This time, the Committee of Management (the organizing committee) consisted solely of 'practicing' or professional artists. Membership consisted of both artists and architects, all of whom were male. This organization was also short-lived, holding only two exhibitions in 1847 and 1848; again women were permitted to exhibit, but they did so under an anonymous title of 'A Lady'.

In Toronto, the principal exhibition venue for painters was the Upper Canada Provincial Exhibition, founded in 1846. The forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), the event was held primarily for the display of agricultural products but an exhibit of paintings was always included. However, the agricultural fair setting was less than satisfactory for the exhibition of art works: "paintings placed on tables and screens were juxtaposed among a jumble of wax flowers, false teeth, boxes of cigars, boas, fur caps, and innumerable other articles" (79). But, this eclectic exhibition served as the main occasion for artists to meet

with one another and the public. Initially, all submissions were exhibited together until 1852 when separate categories were introduced for professional and amateur artists. Professional artists were defined as those who were accustomed to selling their work. The establishment of categories served to divide artists according to gender; the majority of professional artists were male, while the majority of amateurs were female. Monetary prizes were awarded according to category and subject matter; following European tradition, the highest award was allotted to professional history paintings, smaller prizes being allocated to the 'lower genres' of portraiture, landscapes, and flower studies (80). The great popularity of ladies' 'accomplishment art', particularly watercolour painting, brought to Canada by the influx of middle and upper class British immigrants, was reflected in the predominance of women in the amateur section.

The Provincial Exhibition rotated annually among various Ontario communities such as Toronto, Hamilton, Kingston and Brockville. In 1860, the Provincial Exhibition was hosted by Hamilton and the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) opened the Crystal Palace. Built specially for the occasion, the Palace contained the first room in Canada designed specifically as an art gallery (81). By the late 1870s, Toronto's rapid development, both economically and

artistically, recommended it as the most suitable permanent location for the Provincial Exhibition. At this time a 'Ladies Department' was instituted to exhibit handicrafts including painting on china, wood, and fabric, as well as embroidery, repousser, and chasing on brass. Despite its name, men were invited to exhibit in both the amateur and professional categories, although women predominated in both. Handicrafts will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Biased assumptions about women artists already entrenched in European art institutions were echoed in Canada. And as a result, growing numbers of female professional artists in Canada sought to establish their own organizations in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Although women slowly appeared within the ranks of professional Canadian artists, like their European counterparts, they too faced restrictions based on gender. The Ontario Society of Artists (OSA) was open to all professional artists, male and female, from the time of its inception in 1872 (82). However, as with their European counterparts, the OSA constitution restricted the powers and privileges of female members. In particular, women were excluded from the business functions of the Society, as the constitution stipulated that "women shall not have the privilege of voting or attending the meetings unless specifically invited to do so by resolution of the Society" (83).

In 1874, two years after the founding of the OSA, painter Miss E.K. Westmacott became the first woman elected as a full member. Anne Blackwell was elected the following year and in 1876, four more women painters (Elizabeth Adela Forbes, Miss Jane Hamilton, Mrs. S. Hamilton, and Charlotte Schreiber) followed, raising the number of female members to six. Women comprised eighteen percent of the painters or one-eighth of the total membership. Ten years later, in 1886, the five women members, all of whom were painters (Forbes and Jane Hamilton had resigned and Emma Windeat was elected in 1884) comprised only one-tenth of the total memberships and less than twelve percent of the painters (84). It is significant that during the decade, although the total OSA membership remained fairly constant and the proportion of painters rose, the number and proportion of women painters dropped. Without voting privileges, women members could do little to increase their strength within the OSA.

The OSA, realizing the need for art instruction, opened the Province's first art school in Toronto in October, 1876. Although the Ontario School of Art and Design (OSAD) soon came under the control of the Provincial Government, the OSA maintained a close affiliation with the school where several of its members worked as teachers. The limited art training at the OSAD available to both male and female students did

not compare to the instruction available at the major European and American academies. One clear short-coming was the absence of life classes. The curriculum involved "Figure drawing from flat copy, cast, or draped model" only, and even the use of the draped model was apparently a small part of the curriculum (85). But with the assistance of the Royal Canadian Academy (RCA), life classes were held at the OSA as well as other existing institutions in Montreal and Ottawa, or occasionally in the studio of one of the instructors (86). These classes were aimed at providing, "higher art education...with tuition provided free to students who were judged capable and far enough advanced to study from the nude" (87). However, minutes from the OSA Annual Report of May 1891 state that attendance at life classes was restricted to the members of the OSA and the RCA and only professional artists could join these societies (88). The names of the artists who attended these life classes are not listed in the OSA minutes, but given the conservative nature of the Society, it appears likely that the female members did not participate.

Women also faced discrimination within the Royal Canadian Academy, established in 1880 under the aegis of the Governor General the Marquis of Lorne and his wife Princess Louise, both amateur artists. Unlike the OSA and other art

associations, the RCA was established as a national organization, although the founding membership was made up of thirteen painters from Ontario and Quebec, only one of whom was a woman. Charlotte Schreiber, who was born in England and trained in the British academic tradition, exhibited at the Paris Salon and the RA before marrying and coming to Canada in 1874. Despite her professional training and experience, Schreiber, like her European contemporaries, was prevented by the RCA constitution from full participation in the organization. The constitution stated:

Women shall be eligible for membership in the Royal Canadian Academy, but shall not be required to attend business meetings nor will their names be placed upon the list of rotation for the council (89).

Schreiber did, however, wish to participate in the RCA meetings and in 1887, she considered resigning because of such discriminatory practices (90). The RCA removed the restricting clause from the constitution, thirty-three years later, in 1913, but the stigma against women remained. In 1925, Canadian art historian, Newton MacTavish astutely noted that,

...all along there seems to have been a determination to debar women from taking any active part in the affairs of the Academy. It is not assumed that women cannot qualify, but it has been unlikely that any woman could command enough votes to elect her. So that we have throughout the Dominion a number of women who are acknowledged to be better painters than some of the academicians, and yet they may not append the letters R.C.A. to their names. They are permitted, however, to append A.R.C.A., which signifies associate membership (91).

In their History of the Royal Canadian Academy (1934), Jones and Dyonnet (both members of the RCA) explain that the restriction was not a reflection of the Academy's evaluation of the artistic capabilities of female members. Instead it reflected an equally patronizing claim that women were not suited for business operations: "however worthy of Academy honors, the well-known business incapacity of their sex made them [women] unavailable as members of the council." (92) However the RCA may have chosen to defend its actions, the result was that women were denied any opportunity to achieve the highest official recognition of an artist's success in Canada. Despite its willingness to include women initially, the RCA, like the national academies of England and France refused to give women any real power within these organizations. When female academicians expressed their objections, the result in each case was the complete exclusion of female members. During the next fifty-three years, the RCA accepted nineteen women into the lower rank of Associate of the Royal Canadian Academy before painter, Marion Long was elected as the second woman full academician in 1933 (93).

The history of women artists within nineteenth century art organizations is one of inclusion and exclusion. Educational, professional, and social institutions encouraged

women's inclusion in the arts only to a certain point. An examination of these institutions reveals blatant discrimination which severely restricted their involvement. While training for 'accomplishment art' or art-related employment was acceptable, perseverance beyond a certain level was discouraged, if not prohibited. National academies initially included only a few women, although refusing to give them any authority, and soon excluded them totally. The social and moral conventions of the day were just as restrictive and exclusive in prescribing what kind of behaviour as well as what kind of art was acceptable.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, women artists confronted the inequities inherent in the patriarchal institutions by forming their own organizations. Although faced with their own problems, including the reconciliation of demands from amateur and professional members, these organizations provided women with facilities and opportunities from which they were previously excluded.

The art scene in Canada was unique in that its institutions were still in their formative stages, yet they were closely based on European models which had excluded women in France and England. The Women's Art Association of Canada was founded in 1887 to offer women alternatives as well as mutual help and encouragement. The WAAC served both amateur and professional artists by offering a wide range of

activities including exhibitions, classes, lectures, and special interest clubs.

This chapter has provided a brief summary of the major art institutions during the nineteenth century and the issues which faced women artists. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive analysis of these complex issues, but rather to indicate the context in which the WAAC was conceived. The WAAC has undergone many changes in the century since its formation, reflecting the needs and concerns of women artists at the time. The next four chapters will examine the major issues with which the WAAC has been concerned during its development. In Chapter Two I will examine the formation of the WAAC in the 1880s and assess the role played by Mary Ella Dignam, WAAC founder and president for a quarter of a century.

Endnotes

1. Linda Nochlin, "Why have there been no Great Artists?", in Thomas B. Hess and Elizabeth C. Baker, Art and Sexual Politics (New York: Collier Books, 1973). p.26.
2. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, eds., Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. vii.
3. Nochlin, pp. 2-3.
4. Nochlin, p. 37.
5. Germaine Greer, The Obstacle Race (Great Britain: Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd, 1979), p. 12. Greer adds that the proportion of male painters who were not related to other painters is nearly as high as the proportion of women who were.
6. Dorothy Farr and Natalie Luckyj, From Women's Eyes: Women Painters in Canada, (Kingston: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1975) p. 2.
7. Hannah More, "Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education - with a view of the principles and conduct prevalent among women of rank and fortune" (originally published 1799), the complete works, London 1830, vol. 5, as quoted in Charlotte Yeldham, Women Artists in Nineteenth-Century France and England: Their Art Education, Exhibition Opportunities and Membership of Exhibiting Societies and Academies, with an Assessment of the Subject Matter of their Work and Biographies. Vols. 1-2 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1984) p. 8. All references are to volume 1 unless otherwise indicated.
8. Yeldham uses the term 'accomplishment art' to refer to the art, primarily watercolour painting and drawing, of amateur women of the middle and upper classes. Accomplishment art enjoyed its greatest popularity during the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
9. Mrs. Ellis, "The Daughters of England: Their Position in Society, Character and Responsibilities" in The Family Monitor and Domestic Guide (New York, 1844), pp.35-39.
10. Spectator, 7 June 1851, p. 547, as cited in Nunn, pp. 38-39.

11. John Ruskin to Sophia Sisnett, 1858 as cited in Pamela Gerrish Nunn, Victorian Women Artists (London: The Women's Press, 1987), p.15.

12. Nunn, p. 15. Opponents of this claim could call on the names of European painters Margaret van Eyck, Elisabetta Sirani, Artemesia Gentileschi, Angelica Kauffmann, and Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, and sculptor Anne Damer. But as Nochlin has indicated, this argument is simplistic and ignores the social, educational, and institutional factors.

13. There are a number of examples of successful female painters who were characterized as masculine. The most notable example is the highly acclaimed French painter, Rosa Bonheur (1822-99). Discussions of her work are frequently accompanied, if not overshadowed, by accounts of her preference for wearing trousers (in 1857, Bonheur gained police permission to wear men's dress in public places, apparently so that she would not be molested when working - Greer, p. 58), and her well-known dislike of men (Bonheur, who never married, often announced her dislike of men, joking that the only males who attracted her were the bulls she painted - Greer, p. 57). In Canada, sculptor, Florence Wyle, also preferred masculine dress, which Boyanoski has described as "her way of dealing with what she perceived to be the unfairness of being a woman in a man's profession, or for that matter, in a man's world." [Christine Boyanoski, Loring and Wyle: Sculptors' Legacy (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1987), p. 1].

14. Anthea Callen, Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement 1870-1914 (London: Astragal Books, 1979), p. 24. To support this, Callen cites an article written in 1872 which states: "As a matter of fact, we find women in Great Britain outnumbering men by nearly a million; and we find also...that three out of six million adult women support themselves and relatives dependent on them." ("Art-work for Women II", Art Journal, March 1872, p. 102)

15. The important contribution made by women to design industries during the nineteenth century is discussed in depth in Isabelle Anscombe, A Woman's Touch: Women in Design from 1860 to the Present Day (London: Virago Press Limited, 1984).

16. Thomas Purnell, "Woman and Art", Art Journal, 1861, p. 107, as cited in Callen, p. 27.

17. Yeldham, p. 19.

18. Charlotte Streifer Rubenstein, American Women Artists from Early Indian Times to the Present (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1982), p. 40.

19. The 'academic style' refers to the officially approved style of painting recognized and promoted by the French and English Academies. This is characterized by a sound knowledge of drawing and anatomy as well as contrived, often grandiose compositions.

20. Yeldham, p. 28. Yeldham does not indicate why women did not apply, but certainly social convention would have discouraged women from pursuing advanced studies in art.

21. Yeldham, p. 30. From 1860 to 1891, 782 male students attended the R.A. Schools while only 163 females attended. The situation began to improve around the turn of the century; from 1891 to 1914 the statistics for enrollment in art were 637 men and 229 women.

22. Women were permitted to study from the 'Living Draped Model' in segregated classes.

23. Nochlin, p. 25.

24. Yeldham, p. 22.

25. Royal Academy Council Minutes, January 9, 1872. Vol XIII, p. 246, as cited in Yeldham, p. 31.

26. Gertrude Massey, Kings, Commoners and Me (London, 1934), p. 128 as cited in Yeldham, p. 35. Yeldham also refers to an entertaining series of letters which appeared in The Times in 1885 which argued that the nude in art had an immoral effect on the rising female generation. One woman, who signed herself "Another British Matron", wrote that the increase in nude studies was a sign of "stealthy, steadfast advances of the cloven foot". (Yeldham, p. 35).

27. The Ecole gratuite de Dessin pour les Jeunes Filles, established in 1803, was the model for the English Female School of Design. Both were government-operated schools.

28. Yeldham, p. 47.

29. Yeldham, p. 54. This was the view expressed by sculptor, Mme. Leon Bertaux in 1873 in her summary of the opportunities for women art students at that time.

30. When renowned painter, Marie Bashkirtseff was a student at the Academie Julian, she complained that the male students had three instructors while the women had only one, Tony Robert-Fleury (Yeldham, p. 52). An American student, May Alcott, protested that the life classes were segregated and that the male students received better models and paid lower tuition (Rubinstein, p. 93).

31. Yeldham, p. 52-54.

32. Nochlin, p. 26. Some of the more popular ateliers included the studios of Charles Chaplin and Madame O'Connell (Yeldham, p. 51).

33. Yeldham, p. 55.

34. Only unmarried French women between the ages of 15 and 30 were eligible. The first woman to receive the Prix de Rome was Odette Pauvert in 1925.

35. Rubinstein, p. 92. One of the Academy's professors, Thomas Eakins, was forced to resign in 1886 after he removed the loin cloth from a male model in the ladies life class. [Eva Major-Marothy, George Agnew Reid's "radical" choice: The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Thomas Eakins (Ottawa: M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1984), p. 34].

36. Letter (signed R.S.) to James Claghorn, president of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, as cited in Rubinstein, p. 92.

37. Rubinstein, p. 92-3. In the United States, schools were also established to train women in design. The first was the Philadelphia School of Design for Women, set up in 1844 and modelled after the Female School in London. But in general, design education and the training of art teachers developed rather later in America than in Britain (Callen, p. 44)

38. Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, Women Artists: 1550-1950 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1976) p. 36.

39. Harris and Nochlin, p. 36.

40. Harris and Nochlin, pp. 34 and 36. The six women and their dates of acceptance are as follows: Geneviève and Madeleine de Bollonge (1669); Sophie Chéron (1672); Anne-Marie Stresor (1676); la veuve Godequin (1680); and Catherine Perrot (1682).

41. Harris and Nochlin, p.36.
42. Harris and Nochlin, p. 36. The authors' discussion of the details of this incident point out that the Academy's accusations were without foundation.
43. Harris and Nochlin, p. 36.
44. Harris and Nochlin, p. 37, footnote 124.
45. Mémoires et Journal de J. G. Wille, ed. G Duplessis, Paris, 1857, II, 268, as cited in Harris and Nochlin, p. 37, footnote 126.
46. Nochlin, p. 26.
47. Yeldham, p. 71. One artist frequently named in this issue was the portrait painter Sarah Carpenter. In 1833, the Athenaeum wrote that her portrait of the Countess of Denbigh at the Royal Academy might be "compared, without fear with the female heads of most of the Academicians, from some of whom she would surely win the honours of the Academy, were a lady allowed, as of old, to become a competitor".
48. Harris and Nochlin, p. 38. Knight received most of the privileges granted a Royal Academician, but she was only allowed to attend the annual members' banquet for the first time in 1967.
49. Yeldham p. 71. There were over 185 Honorary members between 1800 and 1867.
50. In 1805, when Benjamin West was re-elected President of the Royal Academy, the voting was unanimous with the exception of Moser's vote (Yeldham, Vol. 2, p. 26, note 35).
51. Yeldham, p. 52.
52. Martin Hardie, Watercolour Painting in Britain (1968), vol. 3, p. 245, as cited in Nunn, p. 39.
53. For this same reason, handicrafts were also considered well-suited to women. Handicrafts will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.
54. Yeldham pp. 116 and 118.
55. Nunn, p. 42. In examining subjects depicted by Canadian women artists, Farr and Luckyj found that historical as well as modern painters tended to choose psychological and

narrative themes, people, personal relationships, and emotions, as well as gardens, interiors, and houses rather than action subjects: "One might argue that in the early days, women were restricted; that they did not avail themselves of a wider selection of subjects; and that they kept close to home. Modern interpretations of the same themes frustrate this argument, and one must conclude that women painters have been more willing to grapple with the presentation of delicate human relationships and strong emotions than have other Canadian artists." [Dorothy Farr and Natalie Luckyj, From Women's Eyes: Women Painters in Canada (Kingston: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1975), p. 1].

56. Yeldham, p. 116.

57. Ruskin, as cited in Nunn, p. 16.

58. Ruskin, as cited in Nunn, p. 16.

59. Greer, p. 68. The author added, "When men begin to persecute and exclude women they acknowledge their own insecurity. When they patronise and flatter them they assert the unshakability of their own superiority." In examining the sexual prejudices of male art critics from the nineteenth century to the present, Therese Schwartz concluded that in over one hundred years of critical writing, it is impossible to find direct critical discussion of works of women artists [Therese Schwartz, "They Built Women a Bad Art History", in Feminist Art Journal vol.2, no.3 (Fall, 1973)].

60. Yeldham, p. 88.

61. English Woman's Journal, May 1, 1858, Vol. 1, no. 3, p. 205, as cited in Yeldham, p. 88.

62. Yeldham, p. 90. At the first exhibition of 1857, 358 works were exhibited. This rose to 427 works in 1872 and 825 in 1879.

63. Yeldham p. 98.

64. Yeldham, p. 99. By the tenth exhibition of 1891, 358 artists had exhibited a total of 797 paintings and 33 sculptures.

65. Yeldham, p. 102a.

66. Yeldham p. 102a.

67. Formed in 1892, the Société des Femmes Artistes did not boast many well-known exhibitors and never compared in size with the Union, the maximum number of works exhibited in one year at the Society being 265 in 1906 (Yeldham, p. 105-6).

68. Art Journal, 1868, p. 46 as cited in Yeldham, p. 95.

69. Yeldham p. 97.

70. Greer, p. 359, n. 42.

71. Greer, p. 359, n. 33 and 35. Additional information on these organizations could not be located.

72. Rebecca Sisler, Passionate Spirits - A History of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts 1880-1980 (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1972), p. 19.

73. National Archives of Canada (NAC), RG 5, B26, Statistical Returns.

74. Carol D. Lowrey, "The Society of Artists & Amateurs, 1834: Toronto's First Art Exhibition and Its Antecedents", RACAR, vol. VIII, no. 2, 1981, p. 100.

75. Established in January 1834, the organization was first known as the 'York Artists and Amateurs Association', but with the incorporation of York into the City of Toronto in March, it was henceforth known as the 'Society of Artists and Amateurs of Toronto'.

76. The letter to the editor was signed 'Instigator'. Lowrie suggests that the author was Charles Daly, an amateur painter who served as Secretary to the Society.

77. Lowrey, pp. 107-8. The catalogue was reprinted in 1849, probably by John Howard and this edition recorded the name of Jemima Howard with the works which she executed. The works exhibited by women in 1834 were:

22. Flowers - A Lady

67. Wild Duck Shooting - A Lady [Jemima Howard]

76. Pheasant Shooting - A Lady [Jemima Howard]

84. Woodcock Shooting - A Lady [Jemima Howard]

94. Partridge Shooting - A Lady [Jemima Howard]

104-5. Interiors of a Convent and Monastery - A Lady

145. The Tired Soldier - A Lady [Jemima Howard]

The catalogue also listed a few of the works as being executed by 'An Amateur'.

78. Lowrey, p. 110.

79. J. Russell Harper, Painting in Canada: A History, 2nd edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 114.

80. So pervasive was this sentiment that when Paul Kane entered a painting of contemporary Indian life in the historical category, he was refused the prize and urged to turn to "more glorifying events". (Harper, pp. 114-115).

81. Harper, p. 114.

82. Joan Murray, Ontario Society of Artists: 100 Years 1872-1972 (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1972), p. 5. Initially, artists from outside Ontario were allowed to join but later let their memberships lapse and the OSA became a purely provincial organization. The objectives of the OSA were "the fostering of Original Art in the province, the holding of Annual Exhibitions, the formation of an Art Library and Museum and School of Art" The museum was the Art Museum of Toronto, founded in 1900, later the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO). The art library was the library at the AGO. The school was the Ontario School of Art and Design, founded in 1876, and later renamed the Ontario College of Art.

83. OSA, 75th Annual Spring Exhibition (1947), p.9. Charlotte Schreiber, elected in 1876, was able to attend meetings as she was one of three members of the OSA to serve on the council of the Ontario School of Art and Design. [Margaret Fallis, Charlotte Schreiber, R.C.A. 1834-1922. (Ottawa: M.A. research essay, Carleton University, 1985), p. 31] In 1924, Mary Wrinch Reid was elected Vice-President and Treasurer, becoming the first woman to obtain an executive position within any major art organization in Canada [Newton MacTavish, The Fine Arts in Canada (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1925) p. 145].

84. The annual OSA exhibition catalogue for 1877 (all six women are not yet listed as members in the spring exhibition catalogue of 1876) lists as members 34 painters, 10 architects, 3 engravers and 2 designers, totalling 49. The 6 women members were painters, comprising 17.6% of the total number of painters. In the 1886 catalogue, the membership was comprised of 43 painters, 5 architects, 1 engraver and 1 designer, totalling 50. All 5 women members were again painters, but now they only made up 11.6 percent of the total number of painters. The annual exhibitions often included a few other women as invited guests.

85. Minute and Letter Book, Ontario School of Art, February 1877 to October 1882, 6. First Meeting of Council, January 1875. "Course of study for present session", as cited in Farr

and Luckyj, p. 5. Use of the nude model in student classes is not evident until 1914 and mixed classes were conducted.

86. Sisler, Passionate Spirits, p. 41. Instructors included George Reid and William Cruikshank in Toronto, and Robert Harris and later William Brymner in Montreal.

87. Sisler, Passionate Spirits, p. 41.

88. Eva Major-Marothy, George Agnew Reid's 'Radical' Choice: The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Thomas Eakins (Carleton University: MA thesis, May 1984), p. 27.

89. Sisler, Passionate Spirits, p. 40.

90. Fallis, p. 39. Minutes of the RCA meeting of April 22, 1887 state "The secretary stated that Mrs. Schreiber had requested him to hand in her resignation, but the council instructed him to obtain the same in writing." Fallis concludes that the resignation was not carried out and Schreiber later retired.

91. MacTavish, pp. 25-26.

92. H. Jones and E. Dyonnet, History of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (Ottawa, 1934), Chapter 8, p.3.

93. The formation of less formal organizations such as The Toronto Art Students' League (TASL) in 1886, served to rectify some of the needs not met by either the OSA or the RCA. Like the NYASL, the TASL was more open and accepted any members who, whether professional or amateur, were interested in art. Women artists were apparently admitted to the TASL as equal members, yet the fact that they paid lower monthly fees of \$1.50 while men paid \$2.00, raises questions as to the full extent of their privileges.

Chapter Two

The Formative Years:

The Women's Art Association of Canada, 1887-1900

I found I had to do something to open the door for women and the only way seemed to be the organization of the Women's Art Association. - Mary Ella Dignam(1)

The Women's Art Association of Canada was incorporated in 1892, although its origins can be traced back to 1887 when a group of women artists in Toronto banded together for the purposes of mutual help, co-operation, and fostering a general interest in art. The formation of this first group and its development into the Women's Art Association of Canada are closely linked to the experiences and perceptions as well as the strong will and determination of a single woman - founder and president for the first quarter of a century, Mary Ella Dignam. Chapter Two will commence with a profile of Mary Ella Dignam in order to better understand what motivated her to take up her lifelong crusade for women artists. The chapter will chronicle the growth of the WAAC under Dignam's leadership from an informal group of young women artists to a nationally incorporated association initiating and maintaining regular exhibition programs, lectures, classes, special interest clubs, and other events. Dignam's concern with the role of art in public education,

social improvement, and nationalism aligned the WAAC with the National Council of Women of Canada and the Women's Club Movement and I will examine the Association within this larger context. Finally, I will demonstrate that it is Dignam's ability to respond to the diverse needs of its membership which ultimately results in the growth and prosperity of the WAAC.

In 1886, Mary Ella Dignam, (fig. 2) young and ambitious, returned to Canada from art studies in Europe intent on starting a career as a professional artist. Born Mary Williams in Port Burwell, Ontario in 1860, she was the daughter of Byron Williams and Margaret Eleanor Ferguson, both of United Empire Loyalist descent. Although little is known of her early life, Dignam later stated that her first art lessons were shared with renowned painter, Paul Peel, in London, Ontario (2). Paul Peel (1860-1892) was the son of John Robert Peel, an art educator and promoter. John Peel began teaching drawing to local students during the 1860s in the back rooms of the London Marble Works (3) and at the Mechanics Institute. As an outgrowth of these classes, John Peel co-founded the Western School of Art and Design in 1871 (4). The program sought to co-ordinate the study of fine and applied art; John Peel's training as a stone cutter combined with his interest in fine art had "impressed upon him the need for a knowledge of the fine arts in the service of the

decorative and industrial arts" (5). It is possible that Dignam received her first art instruction at the Western School, under the guidance of John Peel. This is particularly interesting, since Dignam later devoted much effort to promoting fine art as well as applied art and handicrafts.

It is also possible that Dignam's mention of her earliest training refers to the studio of English-born painter William Lees Judson (1842-1928) which was located in Spettigue Hall in London, Ontario. Paul Peel entered Judson's studio in 1875, when he was fifteen years old (Dignam was the same age). The curriculum in Judson's studio was conventional, emphasizing copy work and drawing from plaster casts. But Judson also stressed the study of landscape outdoors, direct from nature, a genre to which Dignam devoted much attention. Dignam could have received her early training from John Peel or Judson, but in either case the opportunities were limited and further instruction would have to be obtained elsewhere.

As already discussed, those men and women desirous of pursuing a professional career in art were forced to leave Canada to obtain the necessary training. In the late 1870s, Dignam enrolled at the newly established New York Art Students' League. Here, Dignam studied under painter, Kenyon Cox (1856-1919), a leading academician and mural and portrait painter; H. Thompson (possibly Harry Ives Thompson, 1840-

1906, a portraitist and figure painter); and painter, William Merritt Chase (1849-1916) (6).

Chase's pronouncement, "I'd rather go to Europe than go to heaven" (7), typified the growing number of art students, who travelled to Europe to study. Dignam was no exception; shortly after marrying John Sifton Dignam (8) at Port Burwell in 1880, and giving birth to her first child that same year, she travelled to Paris to continue her studies. Dignam's independence and determination was remarkable in a time when many women abandoned their artistic aspirations upon marriage and motherhood. Her husband, and daughter, Frances, remained in Canada, tended to by one of John's spinster sisters.

In Paris, Dignam entered the ateliers of Merson and Collin (9). Luc-Olivier Merson (1846-1920) was a successful history painter, who had won the Prix de Rome in 1869 and later became a professor at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1894 (10). Louis-Joseph-Raphael Collin (1850-1916) had studied painting with the Académie Royale masters, Adolphe William Bouguereau and Alexandre Cabanel (11). After the very liberal atmosphere of the NYASL, Dignam made a conscious decision to enter the studios of two artists well versed in the academic tradition. Although there are no surviving documents which record the details of Dignam's training in the studios of these two French masters (12), descriptions

from other female artists in similar circumstances portrayed overcrowded studios and lack of adequate instruction. It was common for the master to appear at the atelier briefly only once a week to offer his criticisms to a crowded studio of aspiring artists (13). This was typical of the quality of training which Dignam hoped would prepare her for a career as a professional artist upon her return to Canada.

Dignam spent much of the next six years in Europe, studying as well as travelling through France, Italy and Holland. Without financial assistance (John Dignam was apparently an avid but unsuccessful inventor at that time) Dignam supported herself by organizing art tours for young ladies. By means of these tours Dignam was able to make several trips to Italy and Holland to see and study the works of the 'Old Masters' (14). Dutch painting in particular was a significant influence on her own work and she later devoted much energy to exhibiting Dutch painting in Canada.

Upon her return to Toronto in 1886, Dignam joined the faculty of the Associated Artists' School of Art and Design (AAS), founded in 1884 by painter, Miss E.K. Westmacott for the purpose of educating women in handicrafts. Westmacott, daughter of English painter and teacher Stewart Westmacott, was the first woman to be elected a member of the OSA in 1874 (15). The school, located on the second floor of the Yonge Street Arcade between Adelaide and Richmond Streets (the

building was later demolished) was divided into two departments: design, under the supervision of William Revell, Miss Mary Frances Pattullo, and Alfred Howard; and painting, under the charge of Mary Ella Dignam. The curriculum was planned to give "thorough and practical instruction in designs for carpets, oilcloths, stained glass, wallpaper, prints, and textile fabrics for manufacture; also in details of interior decoration and embroidery, and in carving and modelling, metal-beating, ceramics, etc." (16) Although not restricted solely to women, the curriculum was aimed at those fields of industrial arts in which they were finding employment: "The institution is virtually, though not of necessity a ladies' school, most of the teachers and all the pupils, with one happy and youthful exception, being of the fair sex." (17) Although little is known about the school, it appears to have been successful, receiving a silver medal for a collective exhibit of pupils' work at the Industrial Exhibition of 1885, and the gold medal in 1886 (18).

It was Dignam who organized the AAS's first classes in drawing, painting, and modelling (19). Like John Peel at the Western School, Dignam recognized that fine art could benefit design. An article in the Globe described Dignam as "A bright, pleasant-faced lady of liberal arts, culture, ranking as one of the first artists of the Dominion and probably

unexcelled on the continent in her talent in producing flower studies." (20) But Dignam's greatest strength was her capacity to organize and lead. When Westmacott became ill in the winter of 1887, control of the AAS fell into the capable hands of Dignam (21). Under her guidance the school flourished; reviews called it, "a veritable hotbed of art and artists" (22) and compared it to the best art schools on the continent (23). By 1889, Dignam had become President, only three years after joining the AAS (24). Her organizational and leadership abilities were already proven.

Dignam's vision of the AAS differed from other instructional institutions such as Peel's Western School. She saw its distinct purpose not simply to give technical training in handicrafts but also:

to create a taste for a higher standard of art in all its phases that [sic] has hitherto been ordinarily demanded....Our subjects are essentially Canadian, and in our own way we seek to make art a patriotic and an educative force in the community." (25)

Dignam's belief that greater emphasis on art, particularly Canadian art, would encourage a higher quality of artistic production and inspire the national and moral spirit of the entire country was based on precedents. In 1856, Rev. Egerton Ryerson, the Chief Superintendent of Education in Toronto had purchased 236 painted copies after works by European 'Old Masters' as well as nearly one thousand plaster casts of sculpture for the Education Museum of the Toronto

Normal School. Although the primary purpose of the collection was educational, Ryerson believed the collection "[could] not fail to be a means of social improvement, as well as a source of enjoyment, to numbers in all parts of Upper Canada." (26)

Dignam's promotion of Canadian subject-matter reflected, on the other hand, a relatively recent phenomenon. As late as the 1860s, Canadian artists had exhibited more scenes of England and the continent than of Ontario and Quebec (27). Twenty years later, an increasing number of artists were calling for the patriotic depiction of Canadian subjects. Painter, J.W.L. Forster wrote of the growing national character in art, "which every loyal Canadian will gladly welcome and judiciously encourage" and noted the vital role which education could play in this process (28). But unlike these earlier promoters of a national art, Dignam's argument emphasized the vital role women artists had to play in this development. To this end, under her directorship at least one branch of the AAS was established outside Toronto, in Galt under the supervision of Miss Cary McConnell (29). The AAS served as a valuable training school for those women who wished to take advantage of the growing opportunities in the industrial arts. However, for those women with interests and training in the fine arts, opportunities remained limited by exclusion from full participation in professional art

organizations, most notably the OSA and RCA. After her studies in the international art centres of New York and Paris, Dignam was frustrated by the lack of artistic opportunities for women in Canada:

I found a few women painting flowers on butter bowls and designing some things they called bannerettes... We had a Royal Academy branch in Toronto but I found I had to do something to open the door for women and the only way seemed to be the organization of the Women's Art Association (30).

Dignam exhibited with the RCA from 1883 to 1924, and the OSA from 1884 to 1912 (31). However, she was never elected a member of either of these organizations. Her name was proposed as associate of the RCA (ARCA) at least four times beginning in 1889, but on each occasion, she was rejected (32). Although the reasons for the rejections were not recorded in the RCA Minutes, the circumstances appear suspect. By 1889, only one woman, Emma Windeat, held an Associate membership (33). That year, Dignam and six others, three women and three men, were proposed for ARCA membership. In an unprecedented action, all seven were rejected. The credibility of the vote comes into question in light of the fact that two of the female artists, Mildred Peel and Harriet Ford went on to develop professional careers and gained important commissions. Three of the seven artists, including Ford, were later elected ARCA members (34).

The oddity of the situation becomes clearer if one looks at the procedure. In order to be nominated, it was necessary

that Dignam's name be proposed by a member (full academician or associate) and seconded by another member. Only full academicians, however, were eligible to vote in the election (35). Dignam's name was proposed and rejected again in 1890, 1891 and 1893. In fact, no other artist's name on record, male or female, had been so consistently proposed and rejected as Dignam's. The fact that Dignam's name was proposed on at least four occasions, and that some forty-seven of her paintings were exhibited in numerous RCA annual exhibitions from 1883 to 1924 leads to the conclusion that refusal was not based on the quality of her work; but rather on her well-known strong feminist stance as an advocate for women artists. The clear wish of the academicians was to avoid further controversy over policies regarding women members (36).

Several years earlier, Dignam had recognized the conservative limitations of the professional art organizations. Like her fellow women artists in England and France, she had felt a need for a separate organization. To this end, in September 1887, she gathered together an informal, unnamed group of Toronto's young women artists; the embryo of the Women's Art Association of Canada. According to a short history of the WAAC written by a member, the group was a self-governing, mutually helpful society modelled after the NYASL. They opened a large, well-lit studio in the Yonge

Street Arcade where young women could meet and work together - drawing, painting, and sketching from still life, and from the 'living model'. Like the NYASL, Dignam's group did not establish a formal curriculum, but served an invaluable role by providing fellow women artists with studio space and models.

The link with Dignam's other educational involvement, the AAS, is clear since the two organizations were located in the Yonge Street Arcade. Dignam continued to teach at the AAS, and served as Director in 1889. It is more than likely that several members of the informal women artists organization were either faculty members or students at the School (37).

Dignam and her colleagues have been credited with being the first women artists in Toronto to depart from the protocol of the Victorian era and use living models (38). The term 'living models' or 'life class' normally referred to the study of the nude. We have already noted in Chapter One that attendance in the subsidized RCA life classes in Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto, was restricted and there was no documentation of any female participants. Similarly, although the less formal Toronto Art Students League also had life classes, we have no records of women participating. Since they paid a lower monthly fee, it is more than likely that they were excluded from some activities, such as life

classes. Dignam's group may well have been the only assured place in Toronto, and possibly Canada, where women could draw from the nude model - a bold and significant commitment on the part of Dignam and her associates.

Their program went beyond life drawing. Most Wednesdays, the studio was reserved for 'art conversation' which was followed by lectures delivered by one of the members or an invited guest. The first Wednesday of each month, however, was reserved for a discussion of composition and criticism of student work (39). The success of the program is demonstrated by the many prizes and medals awarded to members at the Canadian National Exhibition of 1888 (40). The CNE art exhibitions served as an important forum for women artists, and the WAAC supported the CNE by making annual contributions to their displays.

Dignam's group also organized exhibitions of works by members. As their European counterparts had found, Dignam and her colleagues recognized that women's exhibitions offered the participants at least some recourse from the patriarchal preconceptions and judgements which governed the mixed professional institutions. The RCA and OSA had exhibited works by women non-members, but these made up only a small proportion of the total works. Gender biases also existed in the hanging of mixed exhibitions where many women found their works badly hung and, according to reviewers,

often without any justification (41).

In 1889, Dignam's group held their first Art Loan Exhibition, "for the purpose of giving the students an opportunity of studying some of the pictures in Toronto and of giving the public a chance of seeing them." (42) Examples of members' paintings, drawings, and industrial designs were included together with more than fifty European paintings loaned from various private collections in Toronto. One reviewer placed the show "in the forefront of the agencies for art education in this city" (43).

During its early years, the RCA exhibitions had included European paintings loaned from Canadian private collections. Initially, organizers of these exhibitions believed Canadian works were not strong enough to stand on their own; the loaned works were considered essential buttresses to preserve aesthetic standards. By 1886, a new confidence in the quality of the Canadian works blossomed and loaned European works were never again included in the RCA exhibitions (44). As a result, there was virtually no place where a collection of European works could be exhibited and viewed on a regular basis (45). Dignam and her fellow organizers of their 1889 exhibition clearly recognized the value and the need for an Art Loan Exhibition on its own merits, not as compensation for any 'inferiority' of Canadian works. They filled a vacuum. The WAAC would continue to mount Loan Exhibitions as

part of its on-going commitment to educate artists and the public about art.

Four years after its inception, in April 1890, Dignam's informal group broke from the AAS to found The Woman's Art Club, whose purpose was the creation of "a general interest in Art and the encouragement of Woman's Work, for the purpose of mutual help and co-operation of its members, and the holding of Exhibitions and Art Conversations." (46) The motto chosen by the Women's Art Club was that of the old Plantin Printers of Antwerp: "Labore et Constantia" - "By Labour and Constancy". These were prophetic words - throughout its long history, the organization was characterized by hard work, perseverance and endurance.

Not surprisingly, Mary Ella Dignam became the first president. Miss Emma Armstrong was elected vice-president; Mary Frances Pattullo (Dignam's fellow teacher at the Associated Artists' School), secretary; and C.D. Osler, (a former student at the School), treasurer. The club consisted of active and honorary members. The active members, "such women who, as artists and serious students, are willing to subscribe to the objects of the Association, and to pledge themselves to co-operate with one another in its undertakings" (47), were twenty-seven in number, five of whom were classified as non-resident since they lived outside

Toronto (48). Annual fees were ten dollars for residents and five dollars for non-residents. Honorary members, who paid an annual fee of one dollar, were larger in number - 109 including seven artists in the United States. Honorary members were defined as those women interested in the promotion rather than the production of art. Candidates for both active and honorary memberships had to be proposed by one of the members at a regular meeting, and approved by two-thirds of the members present at the next regular meeting.

According to the Club's rules, three exhibitions were to be held annually - the Spring, the Sketch, and the Ceramic. All of the Club's exhibitions were open to public viewing and only original work by women artists (either members or non-members) which had not previously been exhibited in Toronto was accepted, subject to the approval of the Club Hanging Committee (49). The Club emphasized the importance of exhibitions to women artists as "a valuable stimulus and centre, in drawing to a focus much artistic ability that would otherwise have become scattered, or have become lost in desultory or misdirected effort." (50) Dignam was keenly aware of the lack of support and encouragement provided for women artists by traditional art institutions and society in general; the Club's mandate was aimed at meeting the particular needs of women artists and encouraging them to produce work of a high standard.

In 1892 the Woman's Art Club was finally incorporated as the Women's Art Association of Canada (51). Organizers stressed that the Association should be a national one and were gratified to receive applications for membership from cities as distant as Halifax and Winnipeg. They hoped to achieve a unified coalition of women artists who would work nation-wide towards a shared purpose. But establishing a program which satisfied a wide range of artistic abilities for a membership spread out over a wide geographic area proved difficult.

The first major confrontation resulted from a decision made by the WAAC executive that no art instruction was to be given that could be obtained at art schools and private studios in Canada or abroad, an indication that by the 1890s, these women felt that adequate training was accessible to women. This decision caused a split among the membership:

A few members failing to appreciate the Society's broad aim and outlook toward the future, wished to turn its fine rooms into a studio with an instructor, but as the patriotic spirit of the Association had been fostered too strongly to yield, the movement was rejected, and the disaffectants withdrew to open their own studio under a newly-arrived teacher, where they pursued their work for about one year." (52)

Those in agreement with the executive proposal believed that the objective of the WAAC was not to provide instruction, but rather "to draw out, independent of the instructor, personal resources which are necessary to individual and distinctive effort, and alone can produce growth." (53) Thus a clear

distinction between Toronto's Associated Artists School and the WAAC emerged. By the 1890s, more schools were opening their policies to include women. Dignam and many of her fellow WAAC members who had already completed advanced studies in art felt the WAAC should encourage young artists but not duplicate instruction which could be obtained elsewhere. Throughout much of its history the WAAC sought to meet the needs of women artists which were not satisfied by existing art organizations; it maintained a flexible mandate which was continually renewed to reflect the changing needs of women artists in Canada.

As national interest in the WAAC increased, requests for membership from across the country grew steadily. In response to this, the WAAC revised their Constitution in December 1893 providing by-laws for Branch Societies, "to establish a wider circle, keeping the women artists of Canada in touch with one another; and also interesting a wider public in art." (54)

The first branches were formed in Winnipeg, London, and Montreal. Branches were formed wherever there was sufficient local interest to warrant it; by 1898, they were located in Hamilton, Brockville, St. Thomas, Kingston, Ottawa, Portage la Prairie, and St. John, New Brunswick. In addition to staging their own annual and special exhibitions, the

branches received loan exhibitions which were organized by the main branch of the WAAC in Toronto. The main branch published reports from each of the smaller branches in the WAAC annual reports, which served as a valuable source of information on the activities of the other centres across the country. The WAAC maintained a significant level of interaction with the branches in its commitment to represent and unite women artists nationally. However, my emphasis will focus on the main branch in Toronto, since a discussion of the numerous branches which formed and dissolved over the century lies outside the scope of this paper.

In a wider context, the formation of the WAAC can be viewed not only as a response to the inadequacies of existing art institutions but also as part of the growing number and variety of women's groups formed in Canada during the late nineteenth century. In November 1893, the WAAC's federation with the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), and the local Council of Women of Toronto established it as the first women's organization to federate with the National Council and only the second to federate with the local Council (55). By uniting with the NCWC, Dignam acknowledged that the WAAC was not merely an exhibiting society for women artists; it had a larger role to play in asserting the active involvement of women in the social improvement of the country.

It is significant that Lady Ishbel Aberdeen, the wife of Canada's Governor-General John Gordon, Earl of Aberdeen, and an outspoken advocate for women's rights, was elected patron of the WAAC at the same time she was asked to undertake leadership of the NCWC. The first Governor-General's wife to make a public address (an act for which she was often criticized), she lent to both the WAAC and the NCWC, "the prestige [they] would need to overcome the rivalries and divisions of the Canadian club movement not to mention the hostility of anti-feminists" (56).

The formation of the WAAC and its participation in the NCWC can best be seen within what Veronica Strong-Boag has called the 'Women's Club Movement'. In the late nineteenth century, the appearance of numerous associations and organizations reflected the efforts of wealthy middle-class citizens "to affirm community leadership, reform social structures and fix class relationships" (57). The Women's Club Movement encompassed feminine collectives dealing with education, culture, philanthropy, reform, politics, profession, and religion. One of the provocations for the Women's Club Movement was the impact of industrialization. The rapid changing of society both threatened traditional values and lifestyles, and afforded increased leisure time to the middle-class to concern themselves with these issues. Proliferation of organized activities for women ensured that

this leisure time was not idle time as Lady Ishbel Aberdeen noted:

...women know that it is incumbent upon them to use their greater leisure won for them by their husbands and fathers for the good of the community and realizing their power to uphold and increase the moral tone in social life as well as in our home life, but of course, the very fact of this increased sense of responsibility brings about the formation of these organizations of which we have been speaking (58).

Lady Aberdeen's philosophy was compatible with the WAAC's belief that art could improve the moral tone of society.

Added leisure was not the only significant development for women; new educational opportunities were also being offered to women. In addition to greater equality in art education (see Chapter One), women began to graduate from Canadian universities by the last quarter of the century (59). Despite the increased number of professionally trained women, the types of employment socially acceptable were limited, particularly for married women. Women's clubs such as the WAAC offered an alternative, although without professional recognition or benefit of a salary. The WAAC played an important role for women with artistic training but also for those who sought opportunities to pursue their organizational and educational potential as treasurers, curators or lecturers.

Fuelled with good intentions, the WAAC and the Women's Club Movement were often targets of heavy criticism for

"luring women away from the home and leading to the neglect of children" (60). One such example was the criticism levied by Bishop Mills in a speech at Kingston in February 1904, where he denounced "the modern idea of women's clubs as destroying home life" (61). Women were accused of acting with impropriety if they dared to voice their views on moral or social issues, and as a result, were often admonished or disregarded. For many women, however, the stance taken by Dignam and Lady Aberdeen allowed women to make constructive contributions within the restrictive social conventions of the time.

The appeal of women's clubs continued to grow; one indication was the increasing number of WAAC membership applications by 1894. In the two years since its incorporation the number of associate members (the new term for honorary) had increased over twenty percent to 130, while the active membership swelled by 118 percent to fifty-nine (twenty-nine resident and thirty non-resident, many of whom were Canadians studying in London or Paris). To satisfy the diversifying interests of these new members, the WAAC formed several interest clubs. The Saturday Night Sketch Club, which was "quite informal and not confined to members, nor always ladies," (62) met during the winter months at the homes of different members. In the spring, the Outdoor Sketch Club was organized and continued through the summer.

A third sketch club met in the WAAC studio three mornings a week during the winter to draw from live models (fig. 3). These clubs, organized under the charge of a convener and operated in an informal atmosphere of mutual help and encouragement, were in keeping with the 1892 decision to prohibit formal instruction. The WAAC's ability to respond to the needs of the membership contrasted with the conservative and fixed programs of patriarchal organizations such as the RCA.

In 1895, the WAAC asked for and received the co-operation of Toronto artists (male and female) in holding 'Open Studio Days' on the first Saturday of each winter month. This program allowed both WAAC members and the public the opportunity to visit various Toronto artists in their studios. The first Studio Day, held on December 7, 1895, was highly successful with many artists participating and many members of the public taking advantage of this opportunity (63). Toronto's foremost artists were included such as painter Lucius O'Brien, the first President of the RCA, and Wylie Grier, a prominent portraitist who later served as President of both the OSA and the RCA, and Dignam herself (64).

The program continued for several more years, involving many other notable Toronto artists: Mary Hiester Reid, Gertrude Spurr, Laura Muntz, George Reid, Frederick Bell-

Smith, Owen Staples, and Robert Ford Gagen. The WAAC 'Open Studio Day' became not simply a welcomed public event, but more importantly, a significant factor in the development of public interest in art. As one reviewer for Saturday Night remarked: "It is indeed a delightful privilege to visit these rooms, where there is so much beauty and where we become acquainted with a profession which is becoming a more recognized force in our city life." (65)

The expanding sphere of influence is further attested to by the WAAC's ambitious exhibition program which, during the .890s, repeatedly attracted exhibitors from cities throughout Canada and the United States. The Spring Exhibition of 1891, for example, contained work by women artists not only from Canadian cities such as Toronto, Goderich, Brantford, London, and Kingston but also from California, Alabama, and New York. To emphasize the significance of this exhibition, the WAAC issued their first illustrated art catalogue which contained ten pages of lithographic reproductions (figs. 4-6). The illustrations were not reproductions of actual works, but rather free sketches of the paintings. These sketches were executed by members, not necessarily the original artists themselves. The catalogue listed 87 works, most of which were priced between ten and twenty-five dollars, although two paintings by Dignam, Looking for Papa and Youthful Days were priced at \$150 (66). Public response to the exhibition was

enthusiastic and one reviewer noted the increasing number of women artists who were now "receiving more of the recognition which is their due." (67)

Saturday Night, in its enthusiasm, mistakenly congratulated the WAAC members for issuing the first illustrated art catalogue published in Toronto:

It is proverbial that when the menfolks have been unsuccessfully trying to accomplish an end for a considerable time, the ladies take hold of the idea and carry it to a successful issue. So with the catalogue of the Women's [sic] Art Club Exhibition. For several years the artists of the city have been trying to set up a catalogue with illustrations for their annual exhibition, but have never succeeded until this year. But now, three weeks before the Ontario Society's Exhibition, is issued the illustrated catalogue prepared by the Woman's Art Club for their exhibition, and as it is depicted on the allegorical cover, gains for the ladies the credit of issuing the first such catalogue published in Toronto (68).

Such high praise, however appealing, was inaccurate. The OSA catalogue of 1886 contained twenty-seven reproductions of pen and ink drawings of some of the paintings. But the OSA did not illustrate subsequent catalogues during 1887 to 1891, so that the WAAC illustrated catalogue was the second to be published in Toronto (69). What the cover of the WAAC catalogue (fig. 4) does depict is a group of elf-like boys (representing the male-dominated art organizations) gathered along a river bank, one painting and the others watching in distress as a group of fairies (the WAAC) fly away with their prize-winning paintings; they have achieved their success, as

their motto on the banner tells us, by labour and constancy. With the timely publication of their catalogue, the WAAC once again took action to meet the needs of artists and the art public that were not fulfilled by existing institutions. And the humorous cover illustration reflected their firmly held belief that with perseverance, they would triumph over those who had excluded them.

Increased public support for the WAAC exhibition program soon meant that an even larger exhibition space was required. Scarcely one month after the closing of the successful 1891 Spring Exhibition, the WAAC moved to more expansive quarters in the Canada Life Building, located at 40 King Street West (now demolished). This was a prominent and central location (the OSA and commercial galleries were also located on King Street West), an indication of the growing prominence of the WAAC in Toronto.

The WAAC continued its innovative role and presented artists from across Canada and the United States in the Spring Exhibitions. In 1892, over two hundred exhibitors were represented from Toronto, Montreal, Portage la Prairie, Winnipeg, and other Canadian centres, as well as from several American cities. For the first time, the public was invited to view the exhibit without charge. One reviewer congratulated the WAAC on this new departure [free admittance], stating "This has been a long felt want in

Toronto, both from an educational as well as a commercial point of view" (70). The WAAC was responsive to the public's demands in this regard and by so doing, provided an even broader public for the work of women artists.

The Ninth and Tenth Annual Spring Exhibitions of 1897 and 1898 respectively were held at the prestigious commercial Roberts' Art Galleries in Toronto, at the invitation of the owner himself - a clear indication of both the quality of the work and the respected status of the WAAC Spring Exhibitions. In addition to Toronto members, Mary Ella Dignam, M. Cary McConnell, Constance Boulton, Gertrude Spurr, Florence Carlyle, and Charlotte Schreiber, the Ninth Exhibition included artists from Quebec, the Maritimes, New York, Minnesota, and Massachusetts as well as Miss Amy Cross of the Hague, and Miss M. Grayson-Smith of Cheltenham, England. The catalogue listed 120 works by 44 exhibitors. The Canadian works were then sent on to the five WAAC branches of Hamilton, St. Thomas, Brockville, Montreal, and St. John, New Brunswick.

The Tenth Exhibition included forty-three exhibitors among whom were Americans Mrs. Rhoda Holmes Nichols, Vice President and Mrs. E.M. Scott, Secretary, both of the New York Water Color Club. Once again, the exhibition toured to other established WAAC branches, as well as the new branch in

Kingston. These two exhibitions were notably ambitious and impressive as were the catalogues published for both occasions.

The primary sources of information for these early exhibitions are newspaper reviews which, in general, do not provide critical analysis of the works but instead reflect a patronizing, even dismissive attitude towards women's art. As a consequence, it is difficult to determine the standard of work and the importance the event would have had in various communities. But if the reviews fail in their analysis of the paintings, they do serve to document the prevailing perceptions about women artists, as can be seen in a review of the 1892 Spring Exhibition:

The exhibit is large and shows a steady improvement on the last exhibition. Some of the smaller pieces are of especial excellence and considering the fact that the majority of the exhibitors are amateurs, the Woman's Art Club deserve much congratulation for the uniform good quality of their exhibit." (71)

Here, the reviewer, although noting that the scale of the exhibition demonstrates the significant interest in the young Club and commenting on the improved and even excellent quality of the work, proceeds to qualify these statements by stressing the amateur status of the majority of the exhibitors. In so doing, he has placed these women artists in a category outside the male professional world and as such, removed credibility from any positive observations which have preceded.

In another review of the same exhibition, it is the types of subject matter chosen by the artists which are patronizingly presented:

In previous exhibitions by the club studies of flowers were so numerous as to give reason for the poetic remark that women see the world through flowers. This year, while there are some exquisite paintings of floral subjects, they are not in number out of proportion. There are this year more landscapes, some of them charming bits of colour" (72).

The reviewer has damned the artists with faint praise. Although he has referred to the floral subjects as exquisite, he has negated the point by already berating such subjects as trivial. Even the most notable landscapes, a more acceptable subject, are treated as amusements. These reviews are typical of the pejorative and patronizing vocabulary developed during the nineteenth century to discuss women's art.

Five years later, one illustration in an 1897 issue of Saturday Night went even further and satirized these typically 'feminine' subjects (73). The cartoon, entitled, "Impressions - Woman's Art Exhibit" (fig. 7) does not specifically name the WAAC; but Toronto readers could not have overlooked the references to the current Ninth Annual Spring Exhibition. Emma Windeat's A Shady Corner is transformed into a bandit waiting in the shadow of a building while his victim approaches; Florence Carlyle's Spinning Woman is altered to depict a woman madly pedalling a bicycle,

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Eliza Hardings Still-life is parodied by a man gagged and tied to a tree, and Ethel Heaven's Reflection now reveals the silhouette of an amorous couple to a young newspaper boy(74).

The cartoon identifies these subjects - genre scenes and still-lives - as 'women's subjects' and parodies what must have been tranquil subjects with scenes of violence and impropriety. While ridiculing these subjects as repetitious and frivolous, the cartoon is also indicative of the lack of serious attention devoted to women's art by the Toronto press and the public in general. Although the WAAC frankly admitted that the financial results of these exhibitions were poor, Dignam remained undeterred in her commitment to improving and broadening the opportunities for women artists. With characteristic optimism she explained that unlike the rigidly structured RCA and OSA, the WAAC was ever watchful to recognize and encourage some new and bright talent: "There is ever some new phase, as no academic place or distinction is allowed. There is ever some new aspirant claiming attention." (75)

Remarkably, the formation of the Women's Art Association of Canada is largely the result of the vision and energy of one woman, Mary Ella Dignam. Her determination to pursue her artistic training to a professional level in New York and Paris and her ability to support herself financially is extraordinary in light of her defiance of social conventions

and traditional familial obligations. Her unexplained rejection from the RCA must have fuelled her commitment to the cause of women artists and the WAAC. Yet she placed her work within the larger cause of public education, social improvement, and nationalism. This united the WAAC with the NCWC and the Women's Club Movement.

In Chapter Three, which examines the promotion of handicrafts, the WAAC's ability to reconcile the diverse needs of its membership will be further explored. The established academic prioritizing of subjects and media constantly devalued the form and content favoured by women artists. This same patriarchal system not only differentiated between fine art and craft, but also deemed them mutually exclusive. Thus, handicrafts became associated with women and the less significant status of amateur. Undaunted, as we shall see, the WAAC would devote much of its effort and resources to promote the production and exhibition of handicrafts as well as the restoration of traditional crafts threatened by industrialization. The Association continued to respond with new means to meet the changing needs and challenges of its membership.

Endnotes

1. Violet Dickens, "Half-Century of Leadership in Canadian Arts" in Christian Science Monitor (Boston: March 18, 1936), in National Gallery of Canada (NGC) artist documentation file, Mary Ella Dignam.
2. Dickens.
3. John Peel was a marble cutter by profession and was associated with the firm of Lucas and Company which operated the London Marble Works.
4. Victoria Baker, Paul Peel: A Retrospective 1860-1892 (London: Regional Art Gallery, 1986) p. 11. Peel's fellow organizers of the School were London-based painters Charles Chapman, and James and John Griffiths.
5. Baker, p. 11.
6. Harper, Early Painters and Engravers in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 90. Harper records that Dignam attended the NYASL during the late 1870s; a more precise date is uncertain, but given the fact that Chase taught at the NYASL during 1878-1894, one could presume that Dignam was there during the period 1878-1879.
7. Indianapolis Star, January 14, 1899, as cited in Wilbur D. Peat, Chase Centennial Exhibition (Indianapolis: John Herron Art Museum, 1949), p. 14.
8. John Sifton Dignam (1856-1924) was born in Morpeth, Ontario, the son of Irish immigrant Rev. William Dignam and Elizabeth Sifton. He was educated at Wyoming, C.W., Tamarack College, London public schools and business college. He operated a chinaware business in London when he met Mary Ella Williams. After their marriage he remained in London while she pursued art studies in Europe. He was apparently an inventor but did not have much success so that the family was often reliant on Mary Ella's income. In the early 1900s, one of his inventions was a success; he established a fuel business by finding a market for coke screenings which were dumped by the Consumers' Gas Company. He also bought and sold rural lands in Canada and the United States. Mary Ella and John Dignam had three children: a daughter, Frances (van

Hoogenhouck-Tulleken); and two sons, William Stanley Trevelyan and Hugh Molyneux [from Hugh Dignam, A Chronicle of the Dignam Family (Toronto: printed for private circulation, 1962), p. 28-29, and Interview with Elya Chestnut, August 5, 1988].

9. Harper, Early Painters and Engravers p. 90 incorrectly lists these names as Oliver Mercon and Raphael Colin.

10. E. Bénézit, Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs, Vol. 7. (Paris: Librairie Grund, 1976), p. 349.

11. Bénézit, Vol. 3, p. 114.

12. According to Elya Chestnut (Interview, August 24, 1988), there are no surviving papers from Mary Ella Dignam. Hugh Dignam, Mary's youngest son, was the family genealogist, but his records were lost in a fire in the 1960s.

13. Greer, pp. 317-18.

14. Interview with Elya Chestnut, August 24, 1988. Dignam continued to organize the tours for at least two decades; as late as 1900, Dignam's daughter Frances was permitted to accompany her mother to Holland when one young lady became ill and had to withdraw. It was on this trip that Frances met her future husband, Sir John van Hoogenhouck Tulleken, Elya Chestnut's father.

15. The OSA had only one class of membership; it did not have an associate membership.

16. Mary Ella Dignam, "Chapter VIII - Art, Handicrafts, Music and the Drama" in Women of Canada: Their Life and Work (National Council of Women of Canada, 1900), p. 218.

17. WAAC, Scrapbook 1 (Globe, December 16, 1887). The name of the one male student is not given.

18. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, (Globe, December 16, 1887).

19. Dignam, Women of Canada, p. 218.

20. WAAC, Scrapbook 1.

21. WAAC, Scrapbook 1 (Globe, December 16, 1887).

22. WAAC Scrapbook 1, (Globe, December 16, 1887).

23. WAAC, Scrapbook 1 (Mary Silverthorne, "An Hour in an Art School" in London Advertiser, December 14, 1887).
24. Henry James Morgan, Canadian Men and Women of the Time (Toronto: William Briggs, 1892), p. 328.
25. WAAC Scrapbook 1.
26. Fern Bayer, The Ontario Collection (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, for the Ontario Heritage Foundation, 1984), p. 9.
27. Harper, Painting in Canada, p. 179.
28. J. Castell Hopkins, In Canada: An Encyclopedia of the Country Vol. IV, (Toronto: The Linscott Publishing Company, 1898) p. 347.
29. WAAC, Scrapbook 1.
30. Dickens.
31. Michael Pantazzi, NGC, "Index of Exhibitions in Canada between 1830-1914", unpublished.
32. NAC, Royal Canadian Academy Collection, MG 28, I 126, Vol. 17, pp. 67, 72, 79 and 88. The first reference to Mary Ella Dignam in the RCA Minutes is in 1889 at which time she was proposed as an Associate member but not elected. The names of proposed members, those elected and those rejected, are listed for the years 1881-3. During the years 1884-7, only the names of those accepted are recorded and there is no such recording for 1888. It is therefore possible that Dignam was proposed prior to 1889. She was proposed but not elected again in 1890, 1891 and 1893. There were no proposals made in 1892.
33. The other ARCA, Frances M. Jones, resigned in 1888.
34. The seven artists were: Mary Ella Dignam, C. McDonald Manly (ARCA 1890), Joseph Power (ARCA 1891), Miss Harriet Ford (ARCA 1895), Mildred Peel, Mrs. D. Rodgers and Parker Newton. For those preceding years in which the numbers of those rejected were recorded, the statistics are as follows: in 1881, 7 names were proposed and 2 were rejected; in 1882, 9 were proposed and 1 rejected; in 1883, 8 were proposed and 3 rejected. (NAC, MG 28, I 126, Vol. 17, pp. 22, 27, 36).
35. RCA, Constitution and Laws of the Canadian Academy of Arts (Ottawa: A. Bureau, 1879), p. 25. The number of Academicians was limited to forty, while the number of

Associates had no set limit, although it was not to be less than twenty. Academicians were elected from the group of Associates only when a position became vacant through death or resignation. As in the election of Associates, only full Academicians voted.

36. Examples of innovative and progressive artists whom the RCA rejected include Emily Carr, David Milne and Lawren Harris (Sisler, Passionate Spirits, p. 62).

37. For example, Mary Pattullo taught at the Associated Artists School in Toronto, Miss Osler and Miss L. Ware were students there and Miss Cary McConnell taught at the Galt branch. Although there is not any membership list for this early group, these women were founding members of the Woman's Art Club in 1890 and in all likelihood were also members of Dignam's earlier informal artists' group.

38. Deeks, p. 1.

39. Deeks, p. 1.

40. Deeks, p. 1. Unfortunately, the CNE Archives do not have any records from this early date.

41. Yeldham, p. 88. Nunn, pp. 89-92, also makes this point and illustrates it with a very humorous engraving of Varnishing Day at the Royal Academy by Georges DuMarier (1877), in which a crowd of artists climb overtop of one another to add the finishing touches to their works which are already hanging on the wall, floor to ceiling. The women artists are either up on ladders to reach the works at the very top, or kneeling on the floor to reach those at the very bottom; the works belonging to the men are, of course, hanging in between.

42. Deeks, p.1. Included in the exhibition were: Portrait of Liszt by Baron Jakkovsky, lent by Messrs Mason and Risch; A Pinch of Snuff by Lawson, lent by John Payne; Precious Treasures by Pio Ricci, lent by Mrs. H.H. Humphrey; and a watercolour by Louis April, lent by Mr. Reford.

43. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, ("Associated Artists: Opening of Annual Exhibition in Yonge Street Arcade - Fine Pictures on View". 1889).

44. Sisler, Passionate Spirits, pp. 34-35.

45. The exception was Ryerson's collection at the Toronto Normal School, but these works were only copies after original paintings.

46. WAAC, Annual Report, 1890-91, p. 2.

47. WAAC, Annual Report, 1910, p. 35.

48. The Active Members were as follows:
Resident

Miss Emma Armstrong	Miss Amy Street
Mrs. Carter	Miss Jeanie Bertram
Mrs. F.P. Campbell	Miss H.F. Stennett
Miss Daisy Clarke	Miss Smart
Mrs. M.E. Dignam	Miss M. Ansley Sullivan
Miss Drummond	Miss Beatrice Sullivan
Miss Drayton	Miss Grayson-Smith
Mrs. Gregory	Miss Violet Towner
Miss McConnell	Miss Tye
Miss E.L. Orr	Miss Woods
Miss C.D. Osler	Miss Carr

Non Resident

Miss Mitchell	(Tustin, California)
Miss B. Sifton	(Thamesford, Ontario)
Miss Ida Edwards	(Ottawa)
Miss Lewis	(Goderich)
Mrs. Seager	(Goderich)

These are listed in the Annual Report of 1890 as are the Honorary Members.

49. Deeks, p.2.

50. Deeks, p. 2.

51. The group was originally incorporated as the Woman's Art Association and remained as such until 1903. After that, it was called the Women's Art Association. I have not found any explanation for the change and I have used the later form throughout this paper to avoid confusion.

52. Deeks, p. 3. The names of the group and women involved are not known.

53. Deeks, p. 3.

54. WAAC, Annual Report, 1893-94, p. 2.
55. WAAC, Annual Report, 1893-94, p.2. Created in 1893, the National Council of Women of Canada was a federation of local, provincial and national women's organizations devoted to a wide range of spiritual, welfare and cultural causes. Other members of the NCWC federation included the Aberdeen Association, the Girls' Friendly Society, the Dominion Order of King's Daughters and the Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association.
56. Veronica Jane Strong-Boag, The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada 1893-1929 (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975), p. 75.
57. Strong-Boag, p. 2.
58. Strong-Boag, p. 10 (Emphasis: this author's).
59. Canada's first female university graduate appeared at Mount Allison University, New Brunswick in 1875, but women had been admitted as early as 1858. Ontario was slow to follow; women graduated from Victoria and Queen's universities for the first time in 1884.
60. Strong-Boag, p. 42.
61. J. Castell Hopkins, Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs (Toronto: The Annual Review Publishing Company, 1904) p. 567.
62. WAAC, Annual Report, 1893-94, p. 2.
63. WAAC, Annual Report, 1897-98, p. 9.
64. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, (Mail, December 7, 1895).
65. Jean Grant, "Studio and Gallery" in Saturday Night, vol. 12, December 23, 1899, p. 15.
66. Woman's Art Club, Catalogue of the Spring Exhibition (Toronto: Yonge Street Arcade, April 25-May 2, 1891). The WAAC and the AGO both possess a copy of the catalogue.
67. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, (The Globe, April 25, 1891, p. 2).
68. Saturday Night, vol. 4, no. 23, May 2, 1891, p. 7 (Emphasis: this author's).

69. The OSA resumed its publication of illustrated catalogues that year.

70. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, (May 12, 1892).

71. Saturday Night, vol. 5, no. 11, February 6, 1892, p. 6.

72. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, ("Women Painters", in Globe, February 1, 1892).

73. Saturday Night vol. 10, no. 16, March 6, 1897, p. 1. The paintings or photographs of them could not be located for comparison with this illustration.

74. The other works which were parodied are: Chrysanthemums by Miss Dalton; Study of a Negro Boy by Miss Ethel Heaven; Figure Study by Mrs. Elliott; and Lunch Study by Miss A.L. Kelly.

75. WAAC, Annual Report 1897-98, p. 6.

Chapter Three

Revival and Reclamation:

Handicrafts at the WAAC

Influenced by the movement for reviewing and developing handicrafts in other countries...the great importance of those industries as a national development and product became realized.... Therefore, watching for the smallest beginning in any craft, or home industry, the [Women's Art] Association endeavoured to encourage it and to build it up by bringing it in some way to public notice.

- Florence Deeks (1)

In Canada, the successful revival of handicrafts which occurred at the turn of the century was largely due to the dedicated efforts of the Women's Art Association of Canada. The documentation of these efforts will provide the focus for Chapter Three. The WAAC's commitment to support and promote handicrafts was influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain and the United States. A brief examination of the origins of this movement and the roles played by European and American women will place the WAAC's efforts in an international context. The WAAC's involvement in handicrafts can be documented first by the production of handicrafts by members; and second by the promotion of ethnic handicrafts produced throughout the country by women. The fact that the WAAC emphasized handicrafts during this period sets it apart from other art organizations (RCA, OSA and TASL), which

confined their activities to the fine arts. This raises questions regarding the separation of fine art from handicrafts and the specific linkage of women with handicrafts. Emphasis will be placed on the nationalist and socialist concerns, common interests and aims of both the WAAC and the Arts and Crafts Movement.

'Handicrafts', the specific term favoured by the WAAC during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, will be used throughout rather than 'arts and crafts', 'decorative arts' or simply 'crafts'. The term is defined by the Encyclopedia of World Art as "useful or decorative objects made by hand or with tools by a [worker] who has direct control over the product during all stages of production", as well as the methods by which these objects are produced (2). The definition explains further that the term is also used qualitatively to indicate products (including painting, sculpture, and architecture) that did not succeed in reaching the highest levels of art but rather serve as documents of the average production of a period. Clearly, the WAAC's usage relates only to the first section of the definition and refers specifically to the design and production of such media as ceramics, jewelry, metal work, and book-binding. However, the qualitative aspect of the definition is enlightening since it confirms the established practice of aesthetically evaluating handicrafts as distinct

from and inferior to fine art. The initial separation of craft from fine art occurred during the early Renaissance (fifteenth century) when painting, sculpture, and architecture were no longer viewed as manual arts but rather as fine arts. Increasing emphasis was placed on the creator's conception of the idea, rather than mere physical execution of a product. As a result, virtually all handicrafts have been placed outside the realm of fine art, and viewed as purely manual labour that does not involve the originality or genius of conception, the distinguishing feature of fine art.

Traditionally, the fine arts, requiring ambition and purpose of vision, were judged better-suited to men, while handicrafts which were simply decorative were thought to be especially suited to female talents (3). It was presumed that women could combine handicraft interests with their domestic obligations; media which bore the closest affinity to the domestic sphere (embroidery, lace making, quilting) being the ones best suited. This was the situation during the Victorian era at the end of the nineteenth century.

The WAAC's decision to develop handicrafts at this time must be linked to the rescue of traditional craft methods from the encroaching mass production of industrialization in Britain and the United States, known generally as the Arts

and Crafts Movement. The Arts and Crafts Movement began in Britain in the 1860s when the critic John Ruskin and designer William Morris put forward the theory that a nation's design and architecture reflected its social and political health (4). Industrialization was held directly responsible for urbanization and the subsequent disappearance of rural handicrafts which reflected traditional and national values. The philosophy promoted by Ruskin, Morris, and their followers was based on the concept that the revival of traditional manual skills uniting the designer with the maker would not only result in wide distribution of high quality and aesthetically valuable works but also contribute to the improved quality of life. This revival, although based on a romanticized notion of pre-industrial or medieval society, did result in social, political, and aesthetic ideas being embodied in a wide variety of media including printing, bookmaking, pottery, glass, jewelry, and furniture. These various crafts were bound together by a common belief that a well-designed and well-crafted environment would serve to improve the fabric of society for both producers and consumers. The great paradox in this movement lay in the fact that the objects made by hand were far more expensive than those made by machine so that in reality, the products of the Arts and Crafts Movement excluded the disadvantaged masses for whom they were intended (5). Nevertheless, this

philosophy was endorsed repeatedly during the rest of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by kindred spirits in Europe and North America (6).

Morris and Ruskin are revered as the 'Fathers' of the Arts and Crafts Movement, and indeed the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement has traditionally been presented largely in terms of men, such as Edward Burne-Jones, Walter Crane, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Louis Tiffany and Gustav Stickley. Isabelle Anscombe's study of the contribution of women to the Arts and Crafts Movement credits this bias in great part to the fact that the men, notably Morris and Ruskin, were responsible for the majority of theoretical writings on craft: women contributed little in this area. But these theories, which were often romanticized and idealistic, did not in fact accurately reflect much of the practice, to which women made significant contributions (7).

The role assigned to women by such theories was further steeped in paternalistic romanticism. Ruskin saw women's task as "sweet ordering, management, and decision" within the home and, further, "The woman's duty, as a member of the commonwealth, is to assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the state" (8). Women were asked to play a part in this new movement by remaining where they were - in the home. Initially, the dominant image of women created by the Arts and Crafts

Movement was passive, as beautifiers of the home, the heart of the society (9). This ideal was personified in William Morris' wife, Janey. Her contemporaries referred to her as a woman of mystic beauty, a "dark silent medieval woman"; "a grand synthesis of all the pre-Raphaelite pictures ever made" (10). This brooding, passive persona ascribed to her was in large created within the mythology of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (11), and was undoubtedly aided by the fact that Janey was a chronic invalid by the age of twenty-five. But her persona served as the model for women within the early years of the British Arts and Crafts Movement.

By the 1870s, the number of women involved with handicrafts was growing rapidly. Embroidery was one of the first crafts to gain wide popularity among women in Britain. It was ideally suited to the stereotyped image of the woman of the early Arts and Crafts Movement since it was quiet, solitary work. But, involvement at the professional level was limited most frequently to women who were related to better-known male members. For example, Kate and Lucy Faulkner (sisters of Morris' partner, Charles Faulkner), Catherine Holiday (wife of the stained-glass designer Henry Holiday) and Madeleine Wardle (wife of the firm's business manager), who all executed embroidery for the Morris firm, remained centered on the work of their husbands, fathers, and brothers (12). Only Morris' youngest daughter, May, achieved

any real autonomy as a designer, albeit still within the family circle, and in 1885 she took over the management of the embroidery section of Morris & Co. (13)

During the 1880s, however, women emerged from this more isolated role of female artisan as the boundaries of crafts suitable for women were broadened and redefined to include the more physically active media of book-binding and metal work. Women's involvement in a wider range of handicraft employment was aided by the formation of craft organizations and exhibiting societies, such as the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, founded in 1888, and the Women's Guild of Arts, organized in 1907. In addition, growing numbers of women were enrolling in progressive art schools, for example London's Central School, where female students had equal access to proper handicraft training. As a result, a challenge was issued to the traditional view of women's passive and isolated involvement in craft as simply amateur. The first generation of women in the Arts and Crafts Movement had produced work largely without the benefit of professional training; in comparison with the professional work of male designers, their work had often been blamed for the stylistic degeneration of the Arts and Crafts Movement (14). But these women had made a vital contribution by establishing handicrafts as an acceptable career for women. Following in their footsteps, the second generation were able to explore

an even wider range of media, and with better training, gain access to greater professional opportunities.

The effects of the British Arts and Crafts Movement were also felt in the United States. There are, however, several important factors which distinguish the American Arts and Crafts Movement from the British precedent. Most notable is the fact that the American Movement was launched by women amateurs, not male professionals (15). The first major development in the American craft movement occurred in Cincinnati, in the area of ceramics (16). In 1871, a class in overglaze china painting was established at the Cincinnati School of Art. Initially, women students were only responsible for the decoration while the actual throwing of the pots was done by male professionals; some of these students became so skilled in china-painting that a display of their work was sent to the Centennial Exposition held at Philadelphia in 1876 (17). At the Exposition, these students saw many foreign displays and were impressed by both the pottery techniques and the designs. One of these students, Mary Louise McLaughlin, went on to organize the Women's Pottery Club in 1879. The following year, another student, Maria Longworth Nichols founded Rookwood Pottery which, by 1881 began the transition from an amateur to successful professional business. In both of these operations, women

participated in every stage of production. This became a general trend for women involved in handicrafts; they no longer only decorated objects, but now designed and produced them as well.

Around the turn of the century, several magazines appeared in response to the growing interest in the Arts and Crafts Movement, and again many of the pioneering efforts were made by women. One example, Keramic Studio, began publication in 1899 under the editorship of Adelaide Alsop Robineau, an accomplished and experimental ceramist. The magazine not only published information and designs for china-painters and ceramists, but also constantly encouraged women to exploit their talents to the fullest despite the practical problems which they faced as women in the arts.

Ceramics, unlike embroidery which could be done in the home, required workshops and equipment. It was both more physically active and commercially viable. Whereas the Pre-Raphaelite mythology had espoused the passive role of women, North America was seen as the new frontier, and women as pioneering and adventurous (18). Ceramics provided the perfect model for a new role for women artisans in the Arts and Crafts Movement.

In Canada, women also played pioneering roles in the Arts and Crafts Movement. The most ambitious and sustaining

efforts in this regard were made by the WAAC. As was the case in the United States, the most notable early example was in the field of china painting. Encouraged by the expanding interest in this medium, china painters from the potteries in England ventured to the colonies to practice and teach their art (19). As early as the 1860s, one Toronto china dealer, Hurd, Leigh & Co., decided to import plain white ware which was then decorated in its Toronto studio by English-trained workers. The business was very successful with the Hurd, Leigh & Co. claiming to be the sole establishment in Canada where the 'beautiful and delicate process' of china painting was attempted (20). Shortly after, several competitors appeared across Ontario. As well, instruction in the art of china painting became increasingly available in such centres as London, Ontario. Here china painting flourished, due in large measure, to the presence of John and James Griffiths, founders of the Western School of Art, along with John Peel (see Chapter Two). Born in Staffordshire, England, the Griffith brothers trained and worked as china painters before their arrival in Canada. Of the two, John Griffith had a wider influence on china painting through his teaching, but James is credited with first inducing the provincial exhibition committees to include a category for china paintings in their prize lists (21).

Such increased availability of training and exhibiting

facilities led to a virtual 'craze' in china painting throughout Canada (22). By the end of the century the majority of middle and upper class young ladies had received some training in china decorating, either at an art school or with a private instructor (23). In response to the wide interest, the WAAC had organized an annual ceramics exhibition devoted to china painting (figs. 8 and 9). As women became highly proficient, they were able to turn their accomplishments into profitable work. One extraordinary example was the Historical State Dinner Service, a nationwide project, proposed and organized by the WAAC in 1896. The main purpose of the project was to encourage "ceramic artists to a higher standard of excellence in their work" (24). The WAAC decided this could be achieved by organizing the production of a State Dinner Service, to be painted by Canadian women from across the country, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of John Cabot's discovery of Canada. To this end, sixteen-dozen pieces of white china were imported from Sir Henry Doulton's Potteries in England. As a special favour to the WAAC, the Doulton's stamp was retained on each piece; this was the only plain china to have left the Doulton Potteries bearing the factory mark (25).

A committee of WAAC members was formed to search for source illustrations to decorate the china such as old forts, battlefields, old gates and other historical Canadian scenes,

as well as images of the game, fish, shells, ferns, and flowers of Canada. A national competition for china painters was held with work apportioned according to individual proficiency in painting the various subjects (26). The sixteen ceramic artists selected represented Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia (27). Eleven of these sixteen women were WAAC members; in 1896, the WAAC annual reports began to list ceramic artists separately from Active Members and Associate Members, an indication of how popular and significant this craft had become (28).

Information about those women who were selected to decorate the Historical State Dinner Service is uneven. One woman whose career has been uncommonly well documented was Miss Alice Egan (fig. 10) who was selected to decorate twelve game plates with images of game birds (fig. 11). Alice Mary Egan (1872-1982) was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas J. Egan, a gunsmith and sporting goods merchant, and Margaret, an amateur artist. Egan attended the Victoria School of Art and Design in Halifax (now the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design) from 1893 to 1899. It was here that she became interested in china painting which she then studied under a local artist named Bessie Brown. It was undoubtedly her father's interest in hunting that led Egan to submit designs for game birds to the Historical State Dinner Service competition. Winning the

commission was a very significant event in her career - not only for the great honour, but also because it enabled her to acquire her first kiln in 1896 and begin a professional career in ceramics. Following the completion of the Dinner Service in May of 1896, she pursued her study of ceramics in New York under Adelaide Alsop Robineau, founder of Keramic Studio. Upon her return to Halifax later that year, she began a long career of teaching china painting, which she maintained after her marriage to John C. Hagen. Alice Egan-Hagen and her husband spent some time in Jamaica where she received the silver and bronze Musgrave medals from the government in recognition of her important work and contribution in the area of ceramics. Returning to Halifax in 1917, Mrs. Egan-Hagen continued to teach and exhibit work in Halifax and at the WAAC in Toronto. In 1930, the making of pottery became a new focus after her visit to a pottery in France. Thus, at the age of sixty, she returned to Nova Scotia, found an instructor, Mr. Robert Prescott and set up her own pottery studio where she tested and utilized local clays and glazes with characteristic enterprise. She worked into her nineties and died in her hundredth year in 1972 (fig. 8). In recognition of her contribution to ceramics, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design named the Alice Hagen Kiln Building in her honour (25). Alice Egan-Hagen was an ambitious, pioneering and professional woman,

characteristic of the spirit of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada.

We know less of the other fifteen china painters who participated in the Historical State Dinner Service and, like Egan-Hagen, found early support and encouragement from the WAAC to pursue artistic endeavours. These include Miss Martha Logan, a graduate of the London's Royal College of Art and an art teacher at various Toronto schools, who assisted in the decoration of two dozen soup plates and two dozen meat plates with historical views; Miss Clara Galbraith, the first vice-president of the Art Student's League in Hamilton, who painted additional historical scenes; Miss Phoebe Watson, sister of painter Homer Watson, who decorated the remaining soup and meat plates; Miss M. Irvine of Toronto who painted the harbour and bay scenes; the Misses M. Roberts, Lily Osman Adams, and Jane Bertram of Toronto, and A. Kelly of Yarmouth Nova Scotia who decorated two dozen coffee cups and saucers with flowers; Miss Justinia Harrison of Toronto who painted two dozen salad plates with Canadian ferns; Miss Elizabeth Whitney of Montreal who decorated the remaining twelve game plates with water birds; Miss Louise Couen of Toronto who illustrated two dozen fish plates with Canadian fish, seaweed, and shells; the Misses Margaret McClung of St. Catherines and A. M. Judd of Hamilton who adorned two dozen dessert plates with fruit and blossoms; and Miss Hattie

Proctor and Miss Juliet Howson, both of Toronto who illustrated two dozen cheese plates with song birds. (30). The WAAC's firm stipulation that each piece of china be signed by the artist served to recognize the individual contribution of the artists as well as the professional status accorded them (31).

The WAAC's involvement in this project is a reflection of Mary Ella Dignam's strong personal commitment and vision. This interest may have been sparked by her early experiences in London, Ontario where the Griffith brothers had fostered a general enthusiasm for china painting, and was indicative of her responsiveness to the flourishing interest in china painting among women artists throughout the country. The stronger guide, however, was her belief in providing women with opportunities to fulfill their professional potential, in working to gain public and financial recognition for women artists, and at the same time, in serving the nationalistic effort to improve Canadian art and design.

Dignam not only personally orchestrated and supervised the entire project but also took it upon herself to find a suitable buyer for the Dinner Service. This latter point is critical since payment to the artists was conditional upon the sale of the Historical State Dinner Service. Each artist had personally paid the cost of the white china (\$8.60 per dozen) and had been assured by Dignam that the sale price

would not be less than \$60.00 per dozen with the WAAC receiving ten percent of this amount (32). Dignam's first proposal was that the WAAC request the Government purchase the set either for the National Gallery or for the use at Government House. A contemporary newspaper article noted the asking price of \$1000, and urged that the project was "worthy of every encouragement" (33). The Government of Canada responded by offering to purchase the set by means of a private subscription from members of the Senate and the House of Commons. After consultation with Mrs. Dignam it was decided that the service would be presented as a gift to Lady Aberdeen upon her departure from Canada. Dignam was undoubtedly pleased with this decision since she had been a firm supporter of Lady Aberdeen. Touched by the appropriateness and beauty of the gift, Lady Aberdeen, an outspoken advocate of women's groups in Canada, replied:

As to the splendid gift itself, you could not possibly have chosen anything which we would have valued more - for this collection of works of art, beautiful in themselves, could not but have a special value to me as being the handicraft of a number of Canadian women workers with whom I have so many cherished associations of affectionate sympathy and co-operation for common aims and common work (34).

Before leaving the country, the Historical State Dinner Service was exhibited in various centres across Canada. It was then placed in Lady Aberdeen's home, Haddo House in Aberdeenshire, Scotland where it remains today in specially designed cases in the Great Hall (fig. 12). The fact that

photographs of the dinner set appeared in several papers across Canada as well as Keramic Studio testifies to the significance of the project and the wide interest it generated in china painting. As described by one reporter, the results were, "an illustrated history of the scenery and seasons of Canada in 208 volumes,...the most valuable artistic work ever done in Canada." (35)

The Historic State Dinner Service was a success on a number of counts. Firstly, the project raised public awareness and interest in china painting across the country; secondly it united Canadian ceramic artists, at least throughout the eastern part of the country; and thirdly, the WAAC's insistence on a fair market price and its purchase as a state gift was clear recognition of the cultural value and high standard accorded the work of Canadian women artists.

Buoyed by the success of this ambitious project, the WAAC organized the Ceramic Club in 1897. Other handicraft clubs followed and included the bookbinding, woodcarving, jewelry, metal work, and tooled leather clubs. With this growing commitment to these crafts, the WAAC necessarily became involved with more specialized training and the purchasing of heavy equipment through subscription of the associate members. Each craft club met weekly under the charge of the convener, a trained specialist in that craft. By providing the necessary training and facilities, the WAAC encouraged

women to undertake increasingly active and involved crafts and provided the training to ensure a high quality of production and professional standards. Of equal importance in the advancement of handicrafts was the opportunity to exhibit them to the public. Therefore, in 1900, the WAAC exhibited handicrafts for the first time, as part of its Annual Members' Exhibition (fig. 13). The expansion and diversification of handicrafts at this time can easily be demonstrated by examining the participants in this exhibition. Of the seventy-nine women who participated, thirty percent exhibited handicrafts; in addition to the fifty-five exhibitors of oils, pastels, watercolours, sketches, and miniatures, twenty-four women exhibited a wide variety of handicrafts including pottery, embroidery, weaving, rug making, lace making, silk painting, woodcarving, metal work, bookbinding, and leatherwork. The catalogue which accompanied the exhibition made certain to note that after much effort on the part of the WAAC, the interest in handicrafts in Canada was growing:

A revival of interest in handicrafts has been quite marked of late in England and on the Continent. In the last decade much enterprise has been shown and there have been many new developments in the United States. Canada alone seemed to be dormant. By dint of much searching, isolated and desultory efforts have been brought together in the present Exhibition which show that even in Canada a beginning has been made (36).

Crafts continued to be an important part of the WAAC

annual exhibitions with small travelling exhibitions being regularly sent to the branches across the country. In the only other important annual craft exhibition, staged at the Women's Building at the CNE, the WAAC continued to assert its leading role as a force in Canadian handicrafts by regular entries which consistently resulted in awards.

Throughout its involvement in handicrafts, the WAAC played a dual role in the encouragement of production of crafts through the organization of craft clubs and exhibitions of members' work; and in the philanthropic promotion of traditional crafts produced by rural and immigrant women. Such interest in promotion of traditional, rural crafts was not, however, unique to Canada. In their promotion of rural handicrafts, the WAAC followed the precedent of Ruskin and the Arts and Crafts Movement. During the 1870s, Ruskin had taken up the cause of hand-spinners in the Isle of Man, acquiring a watermill for them and encouraging them to produce wool cloth of high quality, guaranteed to 'last forever' (37).

But the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement differed substantially from Britain because of a much greater diversity of traditional handicrafts. The WAAC made concerted efforts to preserve the design and technique of these varied handicrafts. For example, it successfully

encouraged traditional Quebec rug-makers to give up aniline dyes and return to the old-fashioned vegetable dyes which did not fade or become rusty; and located and encouraged skilled lace makers who had emigrated from Great Britain and Ireland to continue their craft. The WAAC organized a loan fund to assist Russian Doukhobor immigrants in obtaining quality materials for their spinning, weaving, and embroideries. In some instances, traditional designs which had been lost in the 'Old Country' were rediscovered and restored as a result of the WAAC's interest (figs. 14 and 15). The WAAC also established ties with the Indians of the Fraser and Columbia Rivers, the Queen Charlotte Island and the Coast of Alaska in an attempt to create interest in the preservation of Indian basketry, pottery, bead and leather work. In all these instances, the WAAC undertook an active role to ensure the continuation of traditional techniques and designs to produce objects of high aesthetic and material quality.

In addition to preserving designs and craft methods, the WAAC recognized the importance of handicrafts as a source of employment for rural women, and put much effort into promoting them commercially. It exhibited the homespun woollens and linens of Quebec in major cities across Canada and internationally in the United States, Great Britain, Italy, Holland, France, and Germany, where eager markets were found. Indeed, the success of this venture resulted in one

magazine, Industrial Canada, crediting the WAAC with bringing "many thousands of dollars worth of orders to the Quebec women... [who show] how responsive they can be when interest is taken in their work and it is encouraged" (38).

Craftswomen across Canada, many from remote areas, were encouraged to send handicrafts to the WAAC's headquarters in Toronto where a permanent exhibition and sales room was set up. Handicraft exhibitions continued to be sent regularly to WAAC branches across the country. And, under the auspices of the Canadian Government, large WAAC exhibits travelled to international expositions at St. Louis, Edinburgh, London, several European centres, and as far afield as Melbourne, Australia. A permanent depot for WAAC handicrafts was established at the headquarters of the Society of Female Artists in London, England. With these and other activities, the WAAC significantly contributed to the production of high quality traditional crafts and the active promotion of handicrafts both nationally and internationally.

The same Industrial Canada article applauded these efforts and praised the WAAC's aims: the preservation of traditional craft methods, the organization of exhibitions, the opening of markets at home and abroad, and the assurance that the workers are paid in cash so that they would not be obliged to trade their work at the country store, or worse still, be forced to emigrate to the larger cities in the

United States (39). Clearly, there was a strong sense of nationalistic pride in maintaining these traditional crafts, and promoting them as Canadian. Another aim noted in the article was the improvement of the quality of life and moral tone of the society. Thus, the WAAC and Dignam viewed the production of craft not simply as a remunerative employment, but more importantly as a way to better the 'lonely', 'isolated' and 'ofttimes monotonous' lives of workers (40). On a broader level, the production of crafts was seen as bettering society as a whole:

The Art Association recognizes that from a generally diffused love of color, form and design arises that thing we call National Art. The many having skill and taste actively used, genius will happen in other and higher fields. With knowledge, patience and skill surely such efforts must bring about a growth of artistic feeling among Canadians. Through the wide development of home industries and handicrafts should spring up a more artistic feeling among our people, a greater love for simple beauty, a greater hatred of the cheap and false, a greater care of the natural beauties, a greater determination not to be content with "good enough," but a determination to do each piece of work as perfectly as possible (41).

The WAAC Handicraft Program and the Arts and Crafts Movement shared a common goal - to improve the social and moral conditions of the nation by promoting the production of high-quality handicrafts. This was done in a number of ways. For rural women of the lower class, the production of handicrafts preserved a traditional way of life and provided some independent income. For middle and upper class WAAC members, the production of handicrafts offered a socially

acceptable employment while affording significant financial opportunities and challenging societal views of women's work. The public at large also benefited through the consumption of well-designed and produced objects. The great purpose was to improve the social and moral tone at every level of society.

The success of these ambitious moral intentions is not easily measured, but such high-minded discourse was a matter of course during the Victorian era and was echoed by members of the Arts and Crafts Movement, the Women's Club Movement and many others. But to view the involvement of the WAAC as simply conforming to the accepted Victorian mission to improve the moral tone and standard of society is to ignore the scope of its achievements.

The WAAC is responsible in great part for the revival of handicrafts in Canada. It provided members with instruction, studio space, equipment, exhibition, and commercial opportunities. The WAAC also aided the preservation and continuation of crafts by rural and immigrant women - it encouraged and aided production and found markets both in Canada and abroad. Handicrafts remained an active and important part of the WAAC program throughout the first half of the twentieth century. By the 1940s, formal courses were offered in weaving, spinning, leathercraft, metal work, and pottery with certificates awarded upon completion. Interest was so great that the crowded facilities had to be remodeled

and enlarged.

The simultaneous involvement of the WAAC with the fine arts and handicrafts was in marked contrast to narrow mandates of male-dominated art organizations such as the RCA, OSA, and TASL. The WAAC, by consistently striving to meet the interests and needs of women artists and artisans, was often ahead of its time. Indeed in 1943, after much demand from its own members, the RCA agreed to include handicrafts in its annual exhibition for that year, nearly fifty years after the WAAC's first handicraft initiative(42).

Mary Ella Dignam, once she had firmly entrenched handicrafts in the WAAC program, turned her energies to meet the new challenges offered by consideration of the international art community. Chapter Four will examine the international involvements of the WAAC during the early twentieth century.

Endnotes

1. Deeks, p. 6.
2. Encyclopedia of World Art, Vol 7, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963), p. 270.
3. Isabelle Anscombe, A Woman's Touch: Women in Design from 1860 to the Present Day, (London: Virago Press Limited, 1984) p. 11.
4. Anscombe, p. 11. The term 'Arts and Crafts' is usually used in reference to the revival of hand made objects during the late nineteenth century, while 'handicrafts' does not refer to work of a specific period.
5. Steven Adams, The Arts and Crafts Movement (London: The Apple Press, 1987) p. 11.
6. Adams, p. 9.
7. Anscombe, p. 12.
8. John Ruskin, Sesame and Lilies, Smith, Elder & Co., London, 1865, p. 178, as cited in Anscombe, p. 16.
9. Anscombe, p. 17.
10. Anscombe, p. 20, quotes letters written by Henry James and set designer W. Graham Robertson.
11. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, formed in 1848, was a short-lived association of dissident artists who rejected academic conventions and sought inspiration in a romanticized, 'pre-renaissance' society, and as such were closely associated with Morris, Ruskin and the Arts and Crafts Movement. Members included Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt.
12. For an in depth discussion of women and embroidery, see Rozsika Parker, The Subversive Stitch (London: The Women's Press, 1984).
13. Anscombe, p. 22. Although May Morris gained greater autonomy as a designer than the other women employed by the firm, Anscombe attributes much of May's ambition to her devotion to her father.
14. Anscombe, p. 30.

15. Edward Lucie-Smith, The Story of Craft: The Craftsman's Role in Society, (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1981), p. 221.
16. The ceramic industry was an important one in Britain, but not one woman's name can be traced in the records of early English potters, "the only way in which the potter's wives assisted their husbands having been, apparently, to carry to market and there disposing of the pots, jugs, etc." (Callen, p. 52.)
17. Lucie-Smith p. 222.
18. Lucie-Smith, p. 220, and Anscombe, p. 41.
19. Elizabeth Collard, Nineteenth Century Pottery and Porcelain in Canada, 2nd ed. (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984) p. 311.
20. "Business Sketches of Toronto", pamphlet published about 1867, as quoted in Collard, p. 312.
21. Collard, p. 315-16.
22. Collard, pp. 318-19.
23. Collard, p. 320.
24. Deeks, p. 4.
25. Marie Elwood "The State Dinner Service of Canada", in Material History Bulletin (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, no. 3, Spring 1977) p. 44.
26. Deeks, p. 5.
27. This indicates that china painting was not as prevalent in the other provinces which, in general, were not as active artistically as Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia.
28. The Annual Report for 1896 lists 27 ceramic artists and 91 active members. By the end of the nineteenth century, there were 65 ceramic artists and 113 active members.
29. Marie Elwood, Alice Hagen Exhibition (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, May 28 - June 14, 1984).
30. Elwood, "The State Dinner Service of Canada", p. 48; Collard p. 320; letter to the author from Elwood December 5, 1988.

31. Collard, p. 321. The signatures on the china also served to document the names of all of the artists involved.
32. Mary Ella Dignam to Alice Egan, 6 November 1896, Lady Aberdeen Collection, University of Waterloo Library, as cited in Elwood, p. 44.
33. WAAC, Scrapbook 1, (World, March 21, 1897).
34. WAAC, Scrapbook 1 ("Lady Aberdeen Surprised - Presented with the Historic Dinner Set", in the Globe, special dispatch, June 13, 1897). The Treasurer's Statement for the 1898 Annual Report shows that the WAAC received \$830.00 for the Dinner Service.
35. Gazette, June 14, 1898, as cited in Collard, p. 321.
36. WAAC, Twelfth Annual Exhibition (Toronto: WAAC Gallery, Confederation Life Building, February 22-March 8, 1900) p. 1.
37. Callen, p. 3.
38. "Canadian Industries in the Home" in Industrial Canada Vol. VII, No. 8 (March 1907), p. 645.
39. "Canadian Industries in the Home", Industrial Canada (Vol. VII, No. 8, March 1907), p. 647.
40. Industrial Canada, p. 647.
41. Industrial Canada, p. 645.
42. NAC, RCA Collection, MG 28, I 126, Vol. 17, p. 387.

Chapter Four

Broadening Horizons:

Internationalism and Professionalism at the WAAC

...unity is strength and isolated unrelated effort cannot be effective in this age. - Dignam (1)

These were the words of wisdom which Mary Ella Dignam offered to her fellow WAAC members at the beginning of the twentieth century. She was speaking of the need to extend international relations and unite with foreign organizations which were working towards similar goals of promoting the work of women artists. With the advent of the twentieth century, the WAAC became increasingly international in focus through its various affiliations, activities, and exhibitions. And this was due, in the greatest part, to the boundless efforts of the President herself, Mary Ella Dignam. Chapter Four will examine the period from 1900 to 1914, the years leading up to the First World War, and the last years under Dignam's presidency. The Chapter will focus on two simultaneous concerns - internationalism and professionalism - which directed the WAAC's activities during this period. This includes Dignam's efforts to represent Canadian professional women artists at the Paris Exposition and the Women's International Art Club. In Canada, these interests are reflected in the Foreign Picture Exhibitions which

exposed the Canadian artists and public to paintings by leading European artists. I will assess the importance of these exhibitions and conclude with a brief discussion of how professionalism and internationalism will affect the WAAC as it enters the war years.

The spirit of the fin-de-siecle was one of great anticipation as the world awaited the dawning of the twentieth century. This spirit infused the planning of the great Paris Exposition of 1900 with aspirations of unsurpassed grandeur. In October 1897, the NCWC executive met in Ottawa to discuss what role they would play in this momentous event. It is significant that Dignam was appointed to the special committee which would organize an exhibit of women's work (presumably to include both fine art and handicrafts). The committee's proposal for the exhibit was presented to Sydney Fisher, Minister of Agriculture, "for which undertaking we had his assurance of consideration." (2) But despite years of anticipation and preparation, their plans were thwarted.

The 1899 Annual Report stated succinctly that "the only part which we have been allowed in the Paris Exposition of 1900, is that your President has been made convener of one of the committees for the preparation of a hand-book by the National Council of Women for the Dominion Government." (3) This handbook was to include a general survey of the position

and activities of Canadian women, and a directory of the various women's organizations (education, charity, employment). Dignam was to be responsible for the whole section on women in the arts: fine art, handicrafts, drama and music. Saturday Night lauded the selection of Dignam and encouraged all women to assist her in her important task:

No one, perhaps, knows better than Mrs. Dignam what women have done in art here. She is eminently qualified to perform the work assigned to her. It is to be hoped that no information which will further this work will be withheld. It is good for us to have it gathered in permanent shape, even if it never reaches Paris, which of course, it shall." (4)

Even these optimistic comments were tinged with skepticism—the recognition that all too often women's attempts to be heard were cut down by the male-dominated bureaucracy.

But indeed, the handbook did reach Paris. The result, Women in Canada: Their Life and Work (1900), over 400 pages in length, covered such topics as professional careers, legal status, education, social life as well as women's involvement in the arts (5). As one might expect, the WAAC received the greatest attention in the section devoted to the arts. Dignam also discussed the Women's Art Club of London, Ontario, and the Montreal Society of Decorative Art as well as numerous art schools (6). She included lists of women illustrators, designers, handicraft workers and art critics as well as brief biographies of thirty-four professional women artists. The final product presented the most

comprehensive compilation of women's involvement in the arts in Canada.

Dignam's active involvement with internationalism was furthered in her role as a founding member of the Women's International Art Club (WIAC). Formed in 1898, the aim of the WIAC was to unite professionally trained women artists and help them to establish careers. These objectives were very similar to those which Dignam had already established at the WAAC, with exception that membership was restricted to professional women artists, and emphasis was placed on international exhibitions. The affinity with the fundamental aims of the WAAC can be seen in the objectives of the WIAC:

to unite together women artists for mutual help in exhibiting in different countries, and, by means of centres, to lessen the cost of sending pictures; secondly, to create club-rooms for the use of members; and lastly, to help forward the cause of international women artists in every way (7).

Qualifications for membership required study in Paris (as most professional artists at this time would have done), and the production of 'strong work' (8). Membership was restricted still further to those women who had exhibited in the Salon (or the principal exhibition in their country) at least twice in the three years prior to joining (9). The Club's mandate was not to represent one school, but rather all schools of painting, "...just as all schools are represented in Paris" (10). To this end, membership was open to professional painters, sculptors, and handicraft workers.

The WIAC opened centres in London, Paris, Philadelphia, and Melbourne, as well as Toronto, where Dignam served as its representative. Although London was the main centre, the others were independent and self-governing. By 1900, there were more than one hundred members representing seventeen different countries. That year, the WIAC opened its first exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in London with 235 works. Although reviewers generally took note of the "harmony of tone, breadth of handling, and an individuality of treatment which prevented the weariness that so often follows a visit to the usual run of picture galleries," (11) the exclusion of handicrafts was criticized. By 1903, this was rectified and handicrafts were a regular feature.

Two remarkable points of interest should be noted about this organization. Unlike any previous women's group, the WIAC was directed solely at professional female artists with the expectation of high standards and participation in professionally recognized exhibitions such as the Salons. It recognized that inequalities still existed within academic institutions and fought back by assisting women financially to participate in international exhibitions; but it felt confident that women were prepared to compete in this environment as professionals. Secondly, the exhibition of paintings, sculpture, and handicrafts together in this

professional setting clearly stated that women's art and handicrafts could no longer be equated with amateurism and mediocre standards, but must be considered as legitimate and important art-forms which had a significant contribution to make within professional organizations and exhibitions.

The formation of the WIAC also encouraged greater international interaction between women's groups. For example, the WAAC under Dignam organized exchanges of exhibitions with the Woman's Institute in London, England, the Glasgow Ladies Art Club in Scotland, and the Guild of Loyal Women in Cape Town, South Africa (12). Reports and catalogues were also exchanged with a number of associations and academies in the United States, Germany, France, and Holland. The international interaction between women artists reflected a new sense of united commitment and ambition.

Dignam, in close contact with many international and foreign women's art groups, made frequent trips to Europe during the early twentieth century. One tangible outcome of the growing involvement with international artists and organizations was the WAAC's annual exhibitions of foreign art. In 1902, the WAAC instituted exhibitions of foreign pictures with the express purpose of showing work by European contemporaries to the Canadian public and particularly

Canadian artists. These exhibitions differed from the earlier Foreign Art Loan Exhibition of 1889 since they did not rely on paintings from Canadian private collections, but featured paintings directly from European artist studios. Although the exhibitions consisted principally of works from Holland and Scotland, these were often supplemented by paintings from French, German, and American studios. One major point of difference between the WAAC and WIAC exhibitions was the predominance of work by male artists. Women artists were included, but they were in the minority. This practice of inviting male artists to exhibit at the WAAC became more common following the First World War when many leading Canadian male artists were invited to show work. The WAAC's commitment to support women artists remained but this did not exclude the exhibition of works by male artists who shared similar aesthetic concerns. The Foreign Picture Exhibitions clearly fell within the WAAC's mandate to educate the public since these exhibitions afforded a rare opportunity to see works by notable contemporary European artists.

Exposure to contemporary European painting was sorely lacking in Canada at this time, as Newton MacTavish explained:

For years the annual exhibitions of the Royal Canadian Academy, the Art Association of Montreal and the Ontario Society of Artists were remarkable for the dead level of mediocrity that prevailed. Nothing

of the work of artists outside Canada was ever seen at any of these exhibitions, so that neither the public nor the local artists themselves had any opportunity to compare side by side the work of Canadians with work from abroad (13).

Although the WAAC Foreign Picture Exhibitions did not exhibit the most modern trends in European painting, the selections were well suited to the popular tastes of the time. During the nineteenth century, the Netherlands had witnessed a revival of artistic achievements with the emergence of the so-called 'Hague School'. Inspired by nationalistic feelings, the works were influenced by Dutch seventeenth century tradition and the French Barbizon artists. The subjects were primarily picturesque landscapes and genre scenes rendered in sombre tones. During 1805-1914, the Hague School artists enjoyed international recognition and fame, participating in numerous exhibitions throughout Europe and North America (14). Their work found much favour in Canada; most of the first Hague School collectors lived in Montreal, Canada's leading centre of commerce and the arts at that time. The Art Association of Montreal (AAM) annual exhibition of 1879 was the first to exhibit a Hague School painting in Canada ("Girl with Goat and Kid" by Mathijs Maris). Works by Hague School artists continued to appear in the AAM annual exhibitions in increasing numbers, all of which were on loan from Canadian collections (15).

In March 1902, the WAAC held the first exhibition of

Hague School paintings in Toronto (16). Dignam's study in Holland had resulted in a special affinity for the Hague School artists, many of whom she knew personally. After an 1896 trip to Holland, Dignam wrote:

We went from Paris to Dordrecht, that most charming of all Old Dutch towns, and stayed a month sketching every day...We went from Dort to The Hague; I taking with me about forty sketches from Dort. There we were especially entertained by [Josef] Israels and [Bernard] Bloomers and spent a charming morning with the [Hendrik] Mesdags...Israels invited us to the private view of the watercolour society of which he and Mesdag are the head, and there we met the artists and their families, not the elite of The Hague. Many of the pictures were already sold to go to America...We were greatly honored with the special attention from Israels, as he scarcely ever entertains strangers at his own home; he is over seventy and not robust. [Willem] Maris ranks next to Israels and is a charming man, though very retired also...After visiting Haarlem and Amsterdam we came to Laren near the Zuiderzee. It is home of [Albert] Neuhuys, [Jacob] Kever and [Anton] Mauve. Pictures and subjects are at every turn... (17)

It is not surprising then that the WAAC's first Foreign Picture Exhibition included a majority of Dutch with some Scottish works, "direct from the studios of the Artists augmented by the loan of some noted examples from Toronto Collections" (18). Some ninety-one paintings were exhibited; sixty-three Dutch and twenty-nine Scottish. The catalogue, which contained biographies on all the artists including Israels, Mauve, J. Campbell Noble and Alexander Roche, bolstered the educational significance of the exhibition.

The inclusion of Scottish works with the Dutch ones in

the WAAC exhibition was a natural choice as they were similar in style and subject matter. Many of the Canadian collectors were of Scottish descent and were no doubt interested in the artists from their country of origin. But also the collectors were influenced by the popularity which the Hague School had also enjoyed in Scotland. Scottish collectors repeatedly visited studios in Holland and in turn, Dutch painter Josef Israels visited Scotland in 1870 (19).

In praising the WAAC exhibition, one Toronto critic made note of the unique contribution to the Canadian art scene:

The exhibition possesses three attributes that entitle it to distinction: it represents the work of the most eminent Dutch and Edinburgh-Glasgow school of Scotch contemporary artists; the paintings have been selected carefully, with a view to securing the best and most characteristic works of the artists in question, and it is the first exhibition held in Toronto of foreign water-colors. It is therefore an opportunity for the exercise and cultivation of artistic appreciation and sensibility never before presented to this community (20).

The WAAC continued to expand its commitment to foreign painting. The second Exhibition of Foreign Pictures, "Watercolours by Dutch and Scotch Artists", was held November 17 to December 27, 1902. Dignam selected the Dutch works on a trip to Holland and Scottish painter C.H. Mackie selected the works from Scotland (21). An offer from the AAM to exhibit a selection of watercolors and the entire collection of cartoons by Dutch artist Willy Sluiter was accepted with an opening on New Years Day, 1903. This exhibition was then

sent to Winnipeg where it was shown in the Masonic Temple. To ensure that art appreciation was not confined to Montreal and Toronto, the WAAC continued to send exhibitions across the country. Dignam was especially proud of her efforts in bringing European art to Canada and declared these showings of masterpieces unmatched by any other North American exhibition (22).

With this success, the Foreign Picture Exhibitions, now comprised of works solely from the artists' European studios, became an annual event for the WAAC. In 1906, the WAAC held a "Special Exhibition of Foreign Pictures" at the National Gallery of Canada, the first exhibition other than the RCA shows to be held there. Prior to 1907 the National Gallery had virtually no exhibition programme of its own; it presented only the annual exhibitions of the RCA, held there approximately every three years since its founding in 1880 (23). The staging of the WAAC Foreign Picture Exhibition at the National Gallery is yet another clear indication of the importance and prominence of the WAAC within the Canadian art community (24).

In the Foreign Picture Exhibition of December 1908, a special section was devoted to the renowned artist and designer of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, Walter Crane. This section comprised 118 works by Crane including illustrations and designs for wall paper, textiles, costumes,

mosaics and stained glass (25). In view of its commitment to the Arts and Crafts Movement, the fact that the WAAC was able to provide members with an opportunity to view the work by one of the leading exponents of this movement was of particular educational significance.

The last WAAC Foreign Picture Exhibition, held in 1913, differed from earlier shows in that paintings by Canadian artists were included alongside works by artists from England, Holland, Scotland, and France (26). This exhibition marked the beginning of a shift in emphasis. In the years following the war, Canadian art would become the major force of the WAAC exhibition program. Despite such changes, the Foreign Picture Exhibitions for more than a decade had been not only a valuable and central force in the Canadian art scene but also served to foster the WAAC's goal of acquainting Canadian artists and public with leading international contemporary artists. Substantial public interest was generated with profound influences, particularly the determining of what works Canadians chose to collect (27).

The early years of the twentieth century leading up to the First World War were marked by internationalism and professionalism. The formation of the WIAC is indicative of the new confidence expressed by women artists; an assurance

in themselves as professionals on par with their male contemporaries, and an assertive recognition that unifying their international efforts would present a stronger and more effective force within the male-dominated art world. Mary Ella Dignam shared this confidence which she aptly expressed in her documentation of Canadian women artists for the Paris Exposition. International contacts made possible the Foreign Loan exhibitions which presented to the Canadian public an unprecedented opportunity to view works by leading professional artists. The WAAC was now a dominant force in the Canadian art scene.

Many advances had been achieved for women artists, largely due to Dignam's seemingly boundless enthusiasm and energy which she infused into the programs at the WAAC; but each small victory had been hard fought for. A rare example of her discouragement and weariness is expressed in her presidential report for 1910:

The opportunities offered to women painters, sculptors, designers and illustrators to exhibit their works and meet together in artistic and well-lighted galleries at so small a fee, is too novel in Canada to be fully taken advantage of, and is given, perhaps, before a real need is felt. The craftswomen find a helping hand and encouragement in the Crafts which are at present in Canada almost impossible-living-occupations... The Foreign and Loan Exhibitions, showing as they do the best of modern art, must be educational, whether appreciated or not(28). After a quarter of a century of her ceaseless efforts to support and promote women artists, such results were bitterly disappointing; Dignam submitted her resignation as President

in February 1913 (29).

Although Dignam relinquished the presidency, she did not abandon the WAAC. Instead, she realized that the organization was at its strongest and most secure. Her personal vision had formed and guided the WAAC for twenty-five years, and it was time to pass the presidency on to the next generation. As well, Dignam had other ambitions, including her own professional career. Her extensive involvement with professional European artists may well have encouraged Dignam to devote more time to her own painting. During the 1920s and 1930s, she held several solo exhibitions at commercial galleries in Toronto, New York, Paris, and London. The effects of Dignam's visits to Holland are evident in a painting such as Woman Sewing (fig. 16), an intimate Dutch genre scene impressionistically rendered with soft colours and dappled light. When exhibited at Toronto's Carroll Gallery in 1924, the catalogue boasted that this and other works were "painted direct from Nature in Holland" (30). Hague Woods (fig. 17), also included in this exhibition, is bolder in handling; the sensuous greens and yellows applied with larger brush strokes capture the fresh immediacy of painting 'en plein air'.

Although Dignam was renowned in Canada for her Dutch scenes, her European exhibitions often featured Canadian autumn landscapes. In Late Autumn (fig. 18), Dignam

heightens both the colour and the atmospheric effects to convey the crisp autumnal sensation. A richer impasto amplifies the drama of the scene. Reviews indicate that Dignam's autumn scenes found a small but receptive audience in Europe. While Dignam's painting remained largely within late nineteenth century academic tradition, she maintained a fresh response to her subject (31).

Despite her other activities, Dignam remained a central figure within the WAAC; she served on the executive committee as Founder and Advisory President, acted as convener overseeing all of the handicraft clubs and exhibited her own paintings at the WAAC on a regular basis. She also organized the 'International Relations Committee' through which she maintained her international interests. In 1927-28, Dignam arranged for the WAAC to become a branch of the League of Nations, explaining: "The Association recognizes that an understanding of the Art, Music, and education of the different countries of the world will strongly tend to promote the great aim of the League - world peace." (32) Three years later, once again at her initiative, the WAAC joined the International Lyceum Club and henceforth was known as the Lyceum Club and Women's Art Association of Canada (33). But apart from Dignam's personal efforts, internationalism was to be replaced by a growing nationalism.

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 put an end to the WAAC's prolific international activities. Broken ties with Europe had made travel and shipping of works unsafe, and war-time patriotism placed emphasis on the need to develop a distinctive, 'national' art. Thus, the annual Foreign Picture Exhibition was replaced by the "All-Canadian Loan Exhibition of Pictures". Travelling exhibitions were also curtailed within Canada with none sent to the Branches during this time. The emphasis shifted toward the home front.

This was symbolically represented by the WAAC's efforts to purchase a permanent home (34). Since its formation, the WAAC had been located in various buildings; the Yonge Street Arcade, the Canada Life Building, and the Confederation Life Building. Now that the home front became a literal focus, the desire to own a building firmly took hold. In November 1916, the WAAC moved into 23 Prince Arthur Avenue (fig. 19), and became the first Canadian women's club to own its own home (35).

The emphasis on professionalism remained an important element within the WAAC, best reflected in its exhibition program. With an established reputation for the high standard of its exhibitions, the WAAC was well-placed to respond to the wave of nationalism which swept over the country following the First World War. A revitalized local exhibition program featured work by many of Canada's leading

professional artists; members and invited guests, female and male. Chapter Five will examine and assess the WAAC exhibition program during the First and Second World Wars to show that the WAAC played a leading role in the advancement of nationalism and modernism in Canadian art.

Endnotes

1. Mary Ella Dignam, "President's Memoranda" in WAAC, Annual Report 1901, p. 8.
2. WAAC, Annual Report 1897-98, p. 7.
3. WAAC, Annual Report 1898-99, pp. 8-9.
4. Jean Grant, "Studio and Gallery" in Saturday Night vol. 13, no. 10, January 20, 1900, p. 9.
5. A copy of this handbook is in the collection of the Ontario Archives in Toronto.
6. The Women's Art Club of London, Ontario was instituted in 1893. In 1894 it became a branch of the WAAC. In 1896 the relationship with the WAAC was discontinued although the club continued to work upon the same lines with much success. The Montreal Society of Decorative Art was organized in 1879.
7. Art Journal, 1900, p. 282, as cited in Yeldham, p. 95a
8. Yeldham, p. 95a.
9. This may have been one reason why Dignam continued to exhibit with the RCA after she was not elected.
10. Yeldham, p. 95a.
11. Yeldham, p. 96.
12. WAAC, Annual Reports, condensed 1901-3 and condensed 1905-7.
13. MacTavish, p. 77.
14. Marta H. Hurdalek, The Hague School: Collecting in Canada at the Turn of the Century (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, May 7-June 26, 1983), p. 13.
15. Hurdalek, p. 14. In the annual AAM exhibition of 1897, 78 of the 184 works on paper were by Hague School artists. All the works were on loan from Canadian collections.
16. Hurdalek, p. 18.

17. Lynn C. Doyle, "Art", in Toronto Saturday Night, September 19, 1896, as cited in Hurdalek, p. 18.
18. WAAC, Catalogue of Special Exhibition of Dutch and Scotch Pictures (Toronto: WAAC Gallery, Confederation Life Building, March 10 to 22, 1902). Lenders included Dr. J.W.F. Ross, Frederick Nicholls, E.B. Osler, M.P., J.W. Flavell, Senator G.A. Cox and C.D. Massey.
19. Hurdalek, p. 15.
20. WAAC, Scrapbook 2, ("Water Color at its Best").
21. WAAC, Scrapbook 2.
22. WAAC, Annual Report, condensed 1901-03, p. 7. With the profits from the foreign exhibitions, the WAAC purchased a watercolour by Hague artist Floris Arntzenius (title and locations unknown).
23. In addition to paintings from Scotland and the Netherlands, this exhibition included works by American artists, Colin Campbell Cooper, E. Lampart Cooper, Ben Foster, E.M. Scott, Anthony Dyer; and one work by the French Barbizon painter, Camille Corot entitled "Courtyard". There was also a selection of Dutch etchings.
24. In 1904, the OSA began to include a Loan Section in their annual exhibitions, showing European works from Canadian collections. In succeeding years, works were also loaned from European collections.
25. Mr. A.H. Howard, a noted designer and illuminator who had designed the official seal for the WAAC in 1912 willed several Walter Crane books and drawings to the Association. Their present location is not known (WAAC, Annual Report 1946-47, p. 15.)
26. Over seventy pictures were exhibited and the annual report for 1913 describes it as one of the finest collections arranged by the WAAC. Unfortunately, a catalogue for this exhibition, if one was printed, has not been located.
27. All those artists included in the 1983 exhibition The Hague School (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1983) which examined the predominant area of art collecting in Canada at the turn of the century, were included in at least one of the WAAC's Foreign Picture exhibitions.
28. WAAC, Annual Report 1909-10, p. 6.

29. In the twenty-five years since Dignam first organized a small group of young women artists, the WAAC had seen tremendous expansion and achievements. It had grown to include 120 active members, 105 handicraft workers and 370 associated members. In that time, 126 exhibitions had been organized and thirty exhibitions had been sent to the seventeen branches across Canada, from Charlottetown to Edmonton (Deeks, p. 8).

30. NGC, M.E. Dignam artist file.

31. Reviews of her exhibitions are contained in WAAC Scrapbook 5 and the NGC Dignam artist file. By 1924, Dignam was sixty-four years of age. A study of her complete artistic career, while certainly warranted, is outside the scope of this thesis.

32. WAAC, Annual Report, 1927-28, p. 19.

33. WAAC, Annual Report 1940-41, p. 6. The Lyceum Club, founded in London in 1903, was an international association, "comprised of women of all nations who are interested in the advancement of Literature, Journalism, Sciences, Public Work, Art, Music, Drama". I will continue to refer to the organization as the Women's Art Association of Canada (WAAC) for the sake of continuity.

34. Following Dignam's resignation, the office of president rotated regularly. Presidents were elected for a two-year term although the average period of service was three to four years.

35. WAAC, Annual Report 1946-47, p. 17. The WAAC is still located at this address. The adjoining house, number 21 Prince Arthur Street, was purchased by the WAAC in 1923.

Chapter Five

The Move to Modernism: a New Road to Nationalism

The best art is an expression
of the life around you.

-Frances Loring (1).

The first half of the twentieth century saw many changes in Canada. Participation in the First and Second World Wars gave the young country a new sense of pride and independence and the desire to establish a unique national identity, distinct from both the United States and Britain. This was reflected in the renewed and revitalized outcries for a nationalistic art. Canadian artists found nationalist expression to be in tandem with the development of modernism. The WAAC had always promoted art as a benefitting force to the Nation and although much of their effort prior to the War had been to present European art, with the outbreak of war, emphasis was turned towards the home front. The WAAC shared a common belief that nationhood could be strengthened through a distinctly Canadian art. It is not surprising then that the Association should seek to play an active role in the promotion of modernism in Canada as a means towards a nationalistic end.

Chapter Five will examine the involvement of the WAAC in the modernist movement in Canada during 1914-1945, the period stretching through the First and Second World Wars. The

commitment to modernism will be documented through an examination of the very active WAAC exhibition program which featured many of Canada's leading professional painters and sculptors, both female and male. By discussing specific exhibitions, as well as artists and their work, this chapter will demonstrate that the WAAC played a leading role in exhibiting works by some of the most expressive, innovative, modernist artists in Canada.

During the nineteenth century, the desire for a nationalistic art had been a popularly expressed theme in Canada but it had remained largely dependent on European academic traditions and imagery. Following the First World War, intensified feelings of nationalism led to renewed calls for a distinctly Canadian art. Led by the Group of Seven, artists turned increasingly to Canadian subjects, notably the northern landscape; stylistically, however, they continued to work largely within European conventions which were now not academic, but 'inherently modernist'(2).

The term 'modernism' refers not merely to chronological time, but also to an ideological stance of deliberate detachment from past concepts, forms and iconography. European Post-Impressionists and Symbolists such as Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Rodin had begun what would become a decisive break with the representational basis of traditional European art. With the Fauve and Cubist artists such as Matisse, Picasso and Braque, the distortion or sacrifice of

realism for purposes of expression established new ideas and attitudes about art and its purpose. In Canada, modernism developed hand-in-hand with nationalism (3): academic realism was abandoned in the search for new independent expressions of Canada.

As already mentioned, nationalism was a fundamental theme in the WAAC philosophy. As the First World War cut off international commitments, the WAAC put increasing energy into activities centred within Canada. Activity at the Toronto headquarters grew steadily and although membership dropped off slightly during the First World War, it reached its peak during the early 1920s when membership grew to 700. Modernism was the major new focus of the various WAAC programs. This commitment to Modernism was a strong and conscious one as seen in the WAAC lecture program during 1918-19. Lecture topics included Dignam on "Modernism in Art", Frances Loring on "Modernism in Sculpture", Minna Keene on "Modern Photography", Ethel Taylor on "Modern Bookbinding and Leather-Tooling", Mrs. Pope and Mrs. Morgan Dean on "Modern Ceramic Art", and Charles W. Jeffreys on "Modernism in Book and Commercial Illustration". Modernist interests pervaded the many diverse fields represented at the WAAC, including fine art and handicrafts, and the WAAC made a concerted effort to inform its members of current developments. But the commitment to modernism is best seen in the WAAC Exhibition program which became increasingly

active. The program included many of the most innovative and talented professional artists, both painters and sculptors, who played leading roles in the development of modernism in Canada.

In Canada, the most visible focus for the modernist movement could be seen in the paintings of Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven. Although not officially formed until 1920, three years after Thomson's death, the Group of Seven had begun nearly a decade before to adopt modernist techniques in their exploration of nationalistic themes. Through images of the rugged northern Canadian landscape, the members sought to produce a "vital and distinctive art which interprets the spirit of the nation's growth" (4). They adopted the flat, simplified, symbolic forms of post-impressionism and the stylized design of Art Nouveau (5). A bold modernist style was used to create a nationalist representation of a rugged northern landscape, which often suggested endurance and survival in a hostile, natural environment (6). With their unique vision of Canada, the Group of Seven would eventually dominate the Canadian avant-garde art scene artistically, politically and economically to become the 'official' modern Canadian style. Supported by Eric Brown of the National Gallery throughout and by discerning public and private collections, the Group continued to dictate taste in Canada for the next two decades (7).

From the time of its formation, the Group of Seven remained exclusively male in its membership. Indeed, it promoted a masculine image of the artist as pioneer explorer venturing into northern regions of Ontario on sketching trips which resulted in rugged depictions of the uncivilized landscape: "Canadian artists were now measured against a bush-whacking masculine model which bound painter, subject and imagination inextricably together within the frontier spirit of a burgeoning Canadian nationalism." (8) Although women were not granted membership, a number were invited to participate in Group exhibitions. Most significantly, fifteen of the nineteen women who were invited to exhibit with the Group of Seven during the years 1923-1931, were associated with the WAAC: ten as members, four as exhibitors, and one as art instructor at the Association (9).

The WAAC hosted lectures by members of the Group of Seven(10) and exhibited their work on a number of occasions. The most active of these men was A.Y. Jackson who was an important friend and influence for many WAAC artist members. Jackson first exhibited paintings at the WAAC in 1925 and continued to show his work into the 1940s. One notable example is the 1927 exhibition of sketches executed during his trip to Baffin Island that year (fig. 20). These sketches, widely recognized for their own artistic merit, present the artist's direct response to his subject and are

freer in interpretation than the larger paintings worked up in the studio (11). The success of this exhibition was followed in January of 1931 by another, and this time Jackson was joined by fellow Group members, Lawren Harris, Arthur Lismer and J.E.H. MacDonald. The exhibition contained work from their most recent exploits, revealing their modern concerns: Jackson and Harris exhibited sketches executed during their recent journey through the Eastern Arctic in August and September of 1930 (figs. 21 and 22); Lismer's works depicted views recorded during his 1930 travels through Nova Scotia; and MacDonald exhibited views of the Rockies. Since exhibitions at the WAAC were often smaller and more informal than those at commercial galleries or the Art Museum of Toronto (AMT), it is probable that the members of the Group of Seven realized the potential for exhibiting their newest work in the more immediate and spontaneous form of sketches. The 1931 WAAC exhibition marked a transitional period for the Group of Seven; later that year the Group would dissolve to form the Canadian Group of Painters in 1933. Here, the contribution of women artists would be better realized (12).

It is significant in light of these future events that during the 1931 exhibition the WAAC conferred the title of 'Honorary Member' upon these four Group of Seven artists: Jackson, Harris, Lismer and MacDonald (13). The flexibility of the WAAC mandate is evident in their willingness to

accommodate male artists in furthering the cause of modernism and nationalism in Canadian art.

Although the Group of Seven had dominated modernist Canadian painting, women artists had an opportunity to play a more central and active role in modernist sculpture. Sculpture was introduced into the WAAC exhibition program in 1914, in response to its growing popularity and the dedicated efforts of a few sculptor members such as Frances Loring and Florence Wyle. By the early twentieth century, a significant proportion of sculptors in Canada were women; of the eighteen sculptors active in Toronto, seven were women (14), several of whom were instrumental in promoting sculpture in the WAAC program.

In 1914, the first recorded WAAC exhibition devoted to sculpture presented the work of four women: Katherine Wallis (1861-1957), Winnifred Kingsford (1880-1947), Frances Loring (1887-1968) and Florence Wyle (1881-1968). Once again, the WAAC led the way, since this exhibition preceded the AMT's first sculpture exhibition in 1915. Indeed, the WAAC exhibition was a probable source of inspiration for the AMT which featured three of the WAAC sculptors: Loring, Wyle and Kingsford. Most notably, the sculpture of Loring and Wyle made up more than half of the AMT exhibition (15).

Unfortunately, other than the names of the four sculptors who participated, there is no further information about the

WAAC sculpture exhibition of 1914. But, an article on Kingsford, Loring and Wyle in the June 1914 issue of Saturday Night may be related (16). Written by painter and WAAC member, Estelle Kerr, this article recounts her visits to the sculptors' studios:

Toronto is rapidly achieving a position in art which has long been accorded to it in music, and women are doing their share in bringing this about, but it is only within the last two years that women sculptors have been prominent. Now we have three who take their places in the first rank of artists: Florence Wyle, Frances Loring and Winnifred Kingsford (17).

Although Kerr does not refer specifically to an exhibition, the timing of her article suggests that it was inspired by the WAAC show. Therefore, one can assume that the works she discusses may have been exhibited in the 1914 exhibition or, at the very least, can be related stylistically to those in the exhibition.

One of the works illustrated in this article is Kingsford's Seated Woman of 1913 (fig. 23). Neither anecdotal, nor a portrait, the work expresses the repose and meditative calm of the seated figure. The artist's emphasis on evoking the mood of the figure was in keeping with early modernist ideas. Ultimately inspired by Rodin, Kingsford shared with Loring and Wyle an admiration for the female figure. She had come in contact with the work of Auguste Rodin, the leader of modernist sculpture, while in Paris as a student of sculptor Antoine Bourdelle, himself a former student and assistant of Rodin. Like Rodin, Kingsford used

the human body to transmit the psychological state of the figure. The pose of the Seated Woman, with the head supported on one hand, is reminiscent of Rodin's famous Thinker of 1880 (fig. 23a), although clearly more restrained than Rodin's powerful, brooding man. But like Rodin's work, the surface of Kingsford's sculpture is not highly finished but rather rough in texture, showing the hand of the artist.

Frances Loring and Florence Wyle were two of the most progressive modernist sculptors in Canada at this time. American by birth, they had met while studying sculpture at the Chicago Art Institute. By 1913, they had settled together in Toronto (where they both remained for the rest of their lives) and soon began exhibiting at the WAAC. Frances Loring's early works were also strongly influenced by Rodin; unfortunately, the large pieces in which this influence is most apparent are known today only from photographs (18). Such is the case with the work illustrated in Kerr's article entitled Fountain, c. 1908 (fig. 24). This sculpture, depicting a male nude stretched over a rocky base to catch some water in his cupped hands, has been compared to Rodin's own Danaid (19), but it also bears striking affinities with his Paolo and Francesca (fig. 24a), executed circa 1887 for the Gates of Hell. Loring's treatment of the smoothly finished reclining figure as contrast to the roughly textured base, so that the figure seems to emerge out of the block of

stone, is clearly modelled on Rodin's conception of sculpture (20).

In her article, Kerr remarks that although Florence Wyle had not benefitted from European study like Kingsford and Loring, her work was stronger because the influence of modernism had allowed her not simply to copy the figure but use it "to interpret her own ideas and emotions"(21). This is evident in Wyle's Dancing Boy of 1910 (fig. 25), one of her few surviving early works, which was exhibited frequently in her formative years (22). This figure captures the frivolous energy of the dance, yet at the same time the awkwardness of adolescence. Rodin explored expressive movement in a work such as Eternal Springtime (fig. 25a) of 1884 (23). The similarities between the two male figures is clear; but Wyle departs further from an academic rendering by attenuating and simplifying the outstretched limbs to express the essence of free, uninhibited movement.

Katherine Wallis, the fourth sculptor in the WAAC's exhibition, was not mentioned in Kerr's article, likely because her studio was located in Paris. Wallis had studied briefly with Rodin, and exhibited regularly since 1897 with the British Royal Academy and at the Paris Salon from 1900, the year she received an honourable mention. Although her achievements had been largely ignored in her native Canada, she had established a successful professional reputation in Europe (24). Again, one must speculate about what work

Wallis would have exhibited. One possibility is Mercury Charmed by his own Invention c. 1904, (fig. 26), a sculpture depicting the young god crouching, his head cocked to one side as he strains to listen to his lyre (25). Although a number of crouching figures by Rodin also explore compressed, awkward poses, Wallis' Mercury is particularly similar to Rodin's The Siren of 1885 (fig. 26a). Both sculptors use contorted kneeling figures with twisting torso, heads pulled over to one side, and bent elbows raised on the other, to expressive ends.

The work of these four sculptors reveals a sound knowledge of Rodin's sculpture and his modernist ideas. In 1916, Kingsford further demonstrated her support for modernist sculpture and particularly Rodin's modernist ideas and work when she delivered an illustrated lecture on Rodin at the WAAC. The WAAC praised her "wealth of material, personal experience and first hand knowledge" of Rodin's sculpture (26), acknowledging Kingsford's pre-eminence in modernist sculpture in Canada. In her continued commitment, Kingsford arranged for the members to see Rodin's work first hand; shortly after Rodin's death in 1917, a number of his watercolours and figure sketches were exhibited at the WAAC (27). M. Chennevières, Secretary to Rodin, was present at the opening of the exhibition and gave a lecture on Rodin. It was through Kingsford's efforts that the WAAC was able to host one of the first exhibitions of Rodin's drawings in

Canada.

Loring and Wyle became active in a number of art organizations within the Canadian art scene, but the WAAC remained an important centre for them. During 1914, in addition to exhibiting at the WAAC, both sculptors exhibited with the OSA and Wyle showed two works at the RCA (28). And in 1915, Loring and Wyle, as noted earlier, 'stole the show' at the first sculpture exhibition at the AMT. But it was the WAAC who hosted their first joint exhibition in 1917 (29). This was a significant event for Loring and Wyle, but it was also an important event for the art public - the first joint show for two of Canada's most promising modernist sculptors. Again there is no record of the works exhibited at the WAAC but the sculpture of Loring and Wyle from this period showed an increasingly sophisticated adaption of Rodin's modernist influence. Loring's debt to Rodin lay particularly in her symbolic use of the human figure to convey emotion, a central tenet of modernist sculpture. This is apparent in a work such as Grief c. 1917 (fig. 27). The closed weighted gesture conveys the isolation and burden suffered by this woman.

Loring and Wyle exhibited their increasingly modernist work at the WAAC on a regular basis. Two mahogany wooden torsos are such examples, known to have been shown at the WAAC. Torso (fig. 28) by Loring is a three-quarter length figure partially emerging from the block of stone. More

daring is the Torso (fig. 29) by Wyle, which makes dramatic use of a fragment of the human body, headless and with only one arm. The use of the partial figure was explored by Rodin during the 1880s; he believed that every part of the human body was expressive and this could be brought out by isolating these parts (30). But Wyle has gone a step further by simplifying, distorting and elongating the forms. Although the subject is recognizable, Wyle's primary concern is not with representation, but rather with the simplification of forms to create gently curving rhythmic shapes. This effect is enhanced by her emphatic incorporation of the grain of the wood, revealing sensitivity and the modernist ideal of truthfulness to materials. The result is a very sophisticated, and modernist work.

Attesting to the success of these modernist sculpture exhibitions, several WAAC members requested that a Sculpture Club be formed. Loring (who had herself become a WAAC member in 1917) was appointed instructor and convener. Ten members met every Friday afternoon at the WAAC to study sculpture (31).

Loring and Wyle brought to the WAAC the work of other innovative and modernist sculptors, most notably the work of Elizabeth Wyn Wood (1903-1966). Recognition came to Wood while still a student at the OCA in 1926 when two of her works were exhibited at the RCA and another was purchased by the National Gallery. Three years later she was recognized

as "the one sculptor in Canada whose art can successfully bear comparison with the most imaginative productions of the rest of the world" (32). In 1932, two works by Wood, Man and Woman of 1926 (fig. 30) and Mourning Woman c. 1930 (fig. 31) are known to have been exhibited at the WAAC. Both pieces eliminate extraneous detail by reducing the forms to simple geometric shapes endowed with power and monumentality. Wood's work, which shares an affinity with the sculpture of Rumanian modernist, Constantine Brancusi, exhibits a love of simple forms, smooth surfaces and defined edges, creating an exciting tension between representation and abstraction. Contemporary painter and critic, Bertram Brooker had noted as early as 1929 that Wood's work "has qualities that relate it at once to the most ancient and the most modern sculpture, so that she becomes a granddaughter of the Sumerians and a sister of Brancusi" (33). Other participants in the frequent sculpture exhibitions organized by Loring and Wyle include Emanuel Hahn (Wood's husband), Jacobine Jones, Eugenia Berlin, Donald Stewart, Stephen Trenka and Merle Foster.

Loring and Wyle remained actively involved with the WAAC throughout the 1920s and 1930s, both as artists and administrators. This culminated in 1938 when Loring was elected president and Wyle took over responsibility for organizing exhibitions. The WAAC thus did not act merely as a stepping-stone for artists who were too inexperienced or had been refused entrance to the RCA or OSA, but actively

engaged significant contemporary artists. It is noteworthy that throughout their long and productive professional careers, women artists like Loring and Wyle remained committed to the WAAC's activities. Clearly, the WAAC offered women artists an important alternative which was not available within the male-dominated OSA and RCA. Because of a flexible mandate which was responsive to the needs of its members, women like Loring and Wyle were allowed to participate fully in the executive areas of the organization. They, in turn, contributed to the growth of the WAAC by their commitment to modernism and to women sculptors.

The WAAC's involvement with modernism can also be seen in their support for a small group of Montreal artists who had formed the Beaver Hall Hill Group (BHH) in the fall of 1920. The BHH was an unstructured but important association of artists, the majority of whom were innovative women painters (34). The group lasted only a year and a half, due to financial difficulties, but many of the members continued to work and exhibit together over the next two decades (35). The members, although aware and supportive of the developments of the Group of Seven, preferred to explore a variety of subject matter such as portraiture, figure-studies and still-life. But they shared the Group's commitment to modernism by utilizing simplified forms and modified colour for expressive purposes.

In 1924, the "Montreal Women Painters" held their first of several exhibitions at the WAAC. The five artists, Emily Coonan, Lillias Torrance Newton, Mabel May, Sarah Robertson and Anne Savage, former members of the BHH, were all born in Montreal and had studied under William Brymner at the Art Association of Montreal (AAM). The teaching at the AAM was closely tied to the modernist French tradition and its predilection for the figure. In addition, Brymner urged his students to seek individualistic expression and fostered in these women, artistic ambitions which were rarely encouraged at this time(36). These women went on to pursue modernist aims with great daring and originality.

Other exhibitions by the Montreal Women Painters followed in 1926, 1930, 1937 and 1940, during which time the number of group members altered and expanded. The names of artists can be accumulated from the Annual Reports and reviews, but descriptions of works are infrequent with specific titles cited even less. Nonetheless, a discussion of work by these Montreal artists will serve to demonstrate how committed the WAAC exhibition program was to modernism. Whenever possible, I will cite examples of works which were exhibited at the WAAC, or failing this, those which were made contemporaneously.

One of the contributors to the first exhibition of 1924 was painter Emily Coonan (1885-1971). Reviewing Coonan's work in 1925, Newton MacTavish noted her anti-academic

originality:

Emily Coonan, notwithstanding her training with William Brymner at Montreal, is yet another woman painter who has departed widely from academic lines. Nevertheless there is a charm about her work, naive and underdrawn as it may appear to be, that cannot be ignored. One thing, her art is unlike anyone else's, and in these days that is enough to give her distinction (37).

Coonan's usual subjects are figure studies and portraits where her primary interests are modernist; she concentrates on form rather than evoking the personality of the sitter. In Girl with Green Balloon c. 1920 (fig. 32), the direct presentation, devoid of anecdotal details, serves to distance the figure from the viewer. Instead, the artist focuses on the bold, simplified form and the overall structure of the composition. She treats her figures with the same objectivity as she would a still-life, just as Cezanne had done.

In contrast to Coonan's objective treatment of the human figure, Lillias Torrance Newton (1896-1980) infused her subjects with life and vitality, thereby creating a new kind of portraiture in Canada. This is seen in official commissioned portraits as well as informal paintings of family and friends. Self-Portrait of 1920 (fig. 33), painted when Newton was in her early thirties, captures the strength and vision of the artist through her choice of pose as well as her strong modelling and rich expressive colour harmonies. References to her painting profession are subtly included through the picture frame at the top right and the curve of

the palette at the bottom right. This undulating line is echoed in the curve of her shoulder and pattern of her shirt and even the curl of her hair. Such interest in the decorative patterning of the painted surface is strongly modernist (38).

In her modernist painting, The Village c. 1924-25 (fig. 34), Mabel May (1884-1971) abandons her earlier Impressionist style under the influence of the Group of Seven, especially A.Y. Jackson, who had been closely associated with the BHH. Here, detail and colour have been reduced and form simplified to geometric shapes, reflecting a Cubist influence, particularly of Georges Braque.

A review of the 1930 Montreal Women Painters exhibition at the WAAC refers to a landscape by Sarah Robertson (1891-1948) with furrowed land and hills (39). The work in question may be Back River Vegetable Gardens c. 1929 (fig. 35), where landscape elements have been simplified and organized into a pattern of undulating horizontals and verticals. Figures are also reduced to broad areas of flat colour bound by dark outline. In later works by Robertson, like Coronation 1937 (fig. 36), the decorative patterning of the surface and the colour become bolder and even more modernist, recalling Matisse and other Fauves.

Prudence Heward (1896-1947), known primarily for her bold paintings of female figures, exhibited In a Cafe c. 1929 (fig. 37) at the WAAC in 1930. Rather than the flat, puzzle-

like integration of colour and form in Robertson's work, Heward prefers the contrast of the angular background with the powerfully rounded, curving forms of her monumental figure (40).

The fact that the WAAC provided these artists opportunity to present their work to the Toronto public as women painters clearly demonstrated the WAAC's commitment to integrate women artists within the modernist art movement in Canada. Women like Lillias Orrance Newton, Mabel May, Sarah Robertson and Prudence Heward, although invited to exhibit with the Group of Seven, had always remained in the shadow of the Group. The WAAC, on the other hand, allowed the strength of their work to stand as a separate but equally important aspect of Canadian modernism.

The WAAC also played a significant role in the artistic development of the female artist most closely associated with the modernism of the Group of Seven, Emily Carr (1871-1945). Inspired initially by the Group's vision of the Canadian landscape, and particularly by the spiritual vision of Lawren Harris, Carr's mature work would become "more resolutely modern - and more emphatically original"(41). In 1927, an important event renewed and revitalized her artistic vision; the National Gallery of Canada hosted an exhibition of "Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern", and included twenty-six paintings as well as pottery and rugs by Carr.

Gallery Director, Eric Brown arranged for Carr to travel east for the opening. Hosted by the WAAC, Carr visited Toronto and was granted immediate membership to the Association. It was the WAAC who arranged what would become the most significant meeting for Carr. WAAC artist members, Katrina Buell and Bess Housser took Carr to visit the studios of the members of the Group of Seven and introduced her to the artists (42). She later wrote in her journal:

Oh God, what have I seen? Where have I been? Something has spoken to the very soul of me, wonderful, mighty, not of this world....Oh these men, this Group of Seven, what have they created? - a world stripped of earthiness, shorn of fretting details, purged, purified; a naked soul, pure and unashamed; lovely spaces filled with wonderful serenity....Jackson, Johnson, Varley, Lismer, Harris - up-up-up-up-up! Lismer and Harris stir me most. Lismer is swirling, sweeping on, but Harris is rising into serene, uplifted planes, above the swirl into holy places (43).

Clearly, the first meeting with members of the Group of Seven was an event of tremendous significance to Emily Carr. The fact that the WAAC received Carr with such enthusiasm and swiftly arranged this meeting clearly indicates that it recognized both the importance of Carr's work and its affinity with the modernist paintings of the Group of Seven.

At this time, the WAAC also expressed interest in arranging a solo exhibit of Carr's paintings, but the idea was rejected because of the potential competition with the West Coast Show at the National Gallery in Ottawa (44). The WAAC would, however, continue to support Carr and exhibit her

work later. The WAAC was firmly committed, not to promoting its own importance, but to serving women artists in ways that were not met by other organizations, and it consistently achieved this.

Carr returned to Victoria but maintained contact with the Toronto art scene, exhibiting paintings as an invited contributor with the Group of Seven, and pottery and hand woven rugs under the aegis of the WAAC in the Women's Building at the CNE. Describing Carr's innovative craft work exhibited at the CNE, one reviewer wrote:

A striking rug it is in the rather dark tones with which Miss Carr has made us familiar in her pictures, but with just the right accent of red. She has chosen a totem pole motif for subject, the Thunderbird. The work is done with a beautiful evenness.

The gifted artist who claims Vancouver Island as her home has sent too several pieces of pottery representative of another of her hobbies. The red clay she has obtained at her own door; her handwork she has baked in her own oven. The motif of the design is again from the Indian totem pole and again Miss Carr has been successful in achieving a unique effect.

With such unique presentations as these one is almost, though not quite, resigned to Miss Carr's absence from the C.N.E. Art Galleries (45).

Carr's Killer Whale Rug c. 1929 (fig. 38) provides a good indication of the handicraft she exhibited with the WAAC. In this excellent example of modernism applied to craft, Carr has adapted an Indian motif and emphasized its bold use of simplified design and flat colour. It is important to note that although Carr's pottery and rugs were seen in the 1927 West-Coast exhibition at the NGC, the context was, as she

herself realized, ethnic rather than artistic (46). In subsequent exhibitions as an invited contributor with the male-dominated Group of Seven, only Carr's paintings were displayed. The WAAC, however, was able to show more than one side of Emily Carr by exhibiting her crafts for their artistic value.

In 1935, the WAAC hosted Emily Carr's first solo exhibition outside of British Columbia (47). Carr was enthusiastic about the prospect of a show at the WAAC:

I have known for some days that I was to have an exhibition in Toronto at the "Women's Art". I felt a little thrilled about it - a chance to see if my work means anything to the outside world. The West is an absolute blank when it comes to ranking one's work (48).

The exhibition, entitled "Tree Paintings", featured fifty of Carr's most mature and modernist works, all executed on paper. During the late 1920s, Carr's contact with the American modernist, Mark Tobey, helped to evolve her mature painting style. From 1932 onwards, Carr depicted the soaring trees of the rain forest and sweeping vistas of the West Coast with tremendous vigour and spiritual energy. Abstract Tree Forms, of 1931-32 (fig. 39) may have been included in the WAAC exhibition. Here, a realistic depiction has been overcome by a great eruption of expressive fervour with sweeping brush strokes using brighter and contrasting colour and active rhythms to convey the vitality and growth of the trees. Edge of the Forest, c. 1935, (fig. 40) is one of

several works in which Carr silhouettes a single towering tree against the sky, exploring the relationship between these two elements. She uses sweeping, rhythmic brush strokes to capture the mystical grandeur of nature in an emotional crescendo of religious intensity. Through her embracement of modernism Carr has captured on paper her emotional and spiritual response in these highly personal interpretations of nature.

Graham McInnes' glowing review of the successful exhibition caused Carr to blush with pleasure when it was read to her (49):

Paint to her is almost a religious experience, but there is no suggestion of a sentimental mysticism. Rather there is, in her work, despite its strength and dynamic movement, a joyous quality reminiscent of the early work of Vlaminck. But Vlaminck has since become what the cruel French call a 'faiseur'; Miss Carr is a great artist and will never do that. I should not like to think that anyone would miss this exhibition (50).

This initiative by the WAAC to introduce Carr's mature and most resolutely personal work to the Toronto public was a clear indication of its commitment to support and encourage modernism. Toronto's Hart House and the Art Gallery of Toronto followed the WAAC's initiative with their own solo exhibitions of Carr's work in 1936 and 1937 respectively. In 1941, the WAAC presented works by Emily Carr from private collections in Toronto which once again saw Carr's paintings and craft work exhibited side by side, but now for their aesthetic value (51).

The 1930s brought economic and political upheaval and artists, like everyone else, felt the consequences. At the WAAC, the Depression resulted in a sharp decline in membership to a low of 180 from over 600 a decade before (52). Despite this, the WAAC maintained its active exhibition program which featured the works of many modernist Canadian artists. The post-war optimism which had fuelled the demand for a nationalistic art was replaced by a new social consciousness. As early as 1925, painter Kathleen Munn had remarked, "Nationalism is going out. Provincialism and insularity are less excusable than ever before; we are becoming world minded" (53). The demand for a more global, inclusive art was also a reflection of the growing confidence in Canadian painting and sculpture. Modernist Canadian art had made a strong international showing at the British Empire Exhibitions at Wembley, England in 1924 and 1925. Although modernism in Canada had been based stylistically on European precedents, Canadian artists developed their own expression that was not inextricably bound to representations of desolate Northern scenery.

The Group of Seven, which had dominated Canadian painting during the 1920s, held its last exhibition in 1931. As A.Y. Jackson explained: "The interest in a freer form of art expression in Canada has become so general that we believe the time has arrived when the Group of Seven should expand"

(54). The result was the formation in 1933 of the Canadian Group of Painters (CGP). The disbanding of the Group of Seven and subsequent formation of the CGP was a response to demands for a more inclusive art, one that was comprised of artists of both sexes and allowed room for diverse interests and approaches. As critic Robert Ayre observed, the first CGP exhibition of 1933 revealed a new diversification in style and subject:

The canvasses of the original Group are not the most interesting part of the show. The younger men and women have brought a new energy and a new vision. Not only are we moving toward human life, away from landscape...but in growing up we are beginning to show the effects of the profound disturbances in human affairs which have shaken the world (55).

Figure studies, portraiture and still-life assumed a new importance; subjects which many women artists (including the Montreal Women Painters) had already addressed.

The more inclusive mandate of the CGP was in keeping with the philosophy of the WAAC, and indeed, the majority of women who joined the CGP were already members of the WAAC. The CGP was composed of twenty-nine members, nine of whom were women. Eight of these women (Emily Carr, Prudence Howard, Bess Housser, Isabel McLaughlin, Mabel May, Lillias Torrance Newton, Sarah Robertson, and Anne Savage) were members of the WAAC and the ninth, Yvonne McKague, although not a member, did exhibit at the Association in 1933. This points, yet again to the important link between the WAAC and leading artist groups.

It also indicates that by the 1930s, the Canadian art establishment could no longer ignore the central role of women artists. In reviewing the fifth annual exhibition of Canadian art at the National Gallery in 1930, critic Blodwen Davies had remarked on the strong presence of portrait and figure studies and particularly women painters whom she said stood out conspicuously as a group, revealing themselves "as experimenters of vision and courage, painting broadly and powerfully" (56). Another significant achievement for women at this time was the election in 1933 of Marion Long as a full member of the RCA - only the second woman to receive this title, more than fifty years after Charlotte Schreiber. She was followed shortly by Lillias Torrance Newton in 1937 and Florence Wyle in 1938. And in 1939, the CGP elected Isabel McLaughlin as its first female president. The Canadian art establishment gave its belated recognition to women artists. Schreiber, Newton, Wyle and McLaughlin all were WAAC members; the WAAC, which had been an important forum in presenting the work of many women artists to the public, surely must have felt a sense of achievement in the role it played in gaining some acknowledgement - if not full equality for women artists.

The WAAC continued its leading role throughout the 1930s, by representing those early modernist artists already discussed, as well as many artists from the 'second generation' of modernism. This second generation is

distinguished here from the early modernists by two factors: their subjects and their relationship with the WAAC. Subject matter can be divided into two concerns: social realism and abstraction. During the late 1930s, influenced by the Social Realist school in the United States, artists expressed concerns about social conditions, tackling issues such as the Depression in Canada, as well as international political unrest. One of the most outspoken artists on social issues was Paraskeva Clark (1898-1986).

Clark first became active in the WAAC through her involvement with the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, which she joined after meeting Dr. Norman Bethune in 1936 (57). In February 1939, the WAAC was the site of the Exhibition in Aid of Spanish Orphans which included works by Paraskeva Clark, as well as Yvonne McKague Housser, A.Y. Jackson, Charles Comfort, Carl Schaefer and Fred Haines. An obvious painting for Clark to exhibit on such an occasion would be Presents from Madrid of 1937 (fig. 41). This watercolour still-life is composed of articles sent from Spain by Bethune, including a soldier's hat from the International Brigades, a red scarf with the figures of three men representing the Spanish Popular Front, a magazine and an ancient piece of Spanish music manuscript (58). Clark's predominant concern to express a social statement supporting the Spanish Republican armies, is given force through her modernist treatment; the compressed and flattened space, the

repetition of the rectangular forms, and the bold contrasts of red and green. Clark continued her association with the WAAC during the 1940s, which included the organization of a handicraft class for Russian women. Clark was Russian by birth and Hitler's campaign against Russia during the early 1940s intensified her concern for her homeland and her involvement in Russian-related activities. The WAAC provided a forum for Clark to express her social and political concerns through her work as an artist.

The other important development in subject matter was abstraction. Toronto, largely dominated by the representational work of the CGP, did not see much abstraction until the 1950s, a decade after it had gained acceptance in Montreal. But modernist artists had been experimenting with abstraction as early as the 1920s and they found a forum for their work at the WAAC.

Kathleen Munn (1887-1974), one of the few artists in Toronto wrestling with the problems of abstraction, had limited opportunities to exhibit her work (59). In 1927, the WAAC presented a solo exhibition of her paintings, a significant event for both the artist and the public. It showed examples of the most modernist painting being executed in Toronto at a time when the majority of the Toronto art community preferred to ignore it. And by presenting a solo exhibition, the WAAC put forward a more comprehensive expression of the artist's intent. The painting, Untitled 1

c.1926 (fig. 42) dates to the time of this exhibition. Although landscape served as the inspiration for this work, Munn translates the trees, hills and clouds into strong areas of primary colours and powerful geometric shapes that sweep through space. Munn's daring and technically assured abstractions were not continued. In her second WAAC exhibition, held a decade later jointly with Bertram Brooker, we find a return to more recognizable images.

Comprised of drawings, the WAAC exhibition of 1936 most likely was centred on Munn's Passion Series (fig. 43) which consumed her interest during the 1930s. These drawings, representing the events surrounding Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, suggest the architectonic construction of Cezanne's late works, combining cubistic fracturing of space and classical monumentality. Now recognized as her strongest work, at that time the Passion Series received little critical attention, and it is a credit to the WAAC that they exhibited these very modernist and avant-garde drawings.

The commitment to abstraction continued during the winter of 1944-45, when the WAAC hosted an exhibition of Edna Taçon (1905-1980), "a fine show of non-objective art [which] caused a lot of interest from its new approach"(60). Although non-objective painting had been evident in Montreal in the work of Paul Emile Borduas from 1942 onwards, this was one of the first exposures for Toronto audiences. In fact, Taçon was

singled out as the principal exponent of non-objective art in Toronto (61), since she participated regularly in various group shows between 1941 and 1947. One work which may have appeared in her WAAC solo exhibition is Blue Scherzo 1944 (fig. 44) (62). Taçon's indebtedness to Kandinsky is evident in this watercolour through her use of finely drawn geometric shapes and lines, set against an atmospheric and intense blue colourfield. And as the title indicates, Taçon (an accomplished violinist) shared Kandinsky's belief in the analogies between music and non-objective painting. Her contribution to Canadian art has only recently been explored, with the conclusion that "her presence as an outspoken representative of non-objectivity broadened the options for later artists and helped to lay the groundwork for the acceptance of abstract art by the Toronto public"(63). The initiative taken on the part of the WAAC in exhibiting the most modernist art in Toronto is a clear indication of the daring and assertive role they now held.

The contribution made by the WAAC to Canadian modernism is undeniable. For three decades from 1914 to 1945, it exhibited work by the leading exponents of this movement. It was an important venue for the Montreal Group of Painters who, although they exhibited in association with the Group of Seven, and later the CGP, were able to exhibit as women, separate from the dominating force of the Group; and for

modernist sculptors, led by Loring and Wyle, who had frequent opportunities to organize exhibitions and introduce the work of other sculptors. The second generation of modernists found an outlet for their personal expressions when other, more conservative art organizations were less responsive.

The WAAC exhibition program also included work by Canada's leading male modernists including members of the Group of Seven, Charles Comfort, Bertram Brooker, Edwin Holgate, Gordon Webber, York Wilson and Jack Bush; men who associated with the women members through their shared artistic concerns. Exhibiting their work fell within the WAAC's commitment to modernism and its mandate to educate the public.

It is important to note, however, that the second generation of modernists, both female and male, was involved with the WAAC in a different manner than the first. The early modernists, namely Loring, Wyle and the Montreal Women Painters, were members of the WAAC and continued to exhibit at the Association over many years. The majority of the later artists were not members, and they exhibited less frequently. Although the WAAC served as an important exhibiting venue for these artists, they did not have a long-term commitment to the WAAC.

This was certainly a reflection of the changing role of women artists in Canada. As their central contribution to modernism became undeniable, women gained increasing

acceptance and recognition within the traditional art establishment. This meant that the WAAC's original mandate to support women artists was no longer as vital. Although artists benefitted from the WAAC's commitment to exhibiting modernism, they did not feel committed to supporting or sustaining the organization. This, compounded by the declining membership which had never recovered from the Depression ultimately weakened the WAAC and had a profound effect on the direction of the WAAC programs.

While the WAAC exhibitions had featured the leading professional modernists in Canada, it had maintained the mandate to represent the needs of its wide and varied membership. Throughout this period the membership comprised not only many of the modernists discussed in this chapter but also academic artists, amateur painters, and handicrafts workers. This was also reflected in their exhibition program which comprised a great range and diversity.

The progressive momentum which had built up over the first half of the twentieth century began to dissipate during the 1950s as the active membership weakened. The result would be a crippling of the exhibition program and a turn towards a passive, philanthropic support of the arts. Chapter six will examine the main issues concerning the WAAC following the Second World War, and finally, assess its contribution to mainstream art history in Canada.

Endnotes

1. Quoted by Roger Parr in "A Woman of Value" in Country Beautiful (May, 1963), as cited in Rebecca Sisler, "18-Frances Loring (1887-1968)" in Lives and Works of the Canadian Artists R.H. Stacey, ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1978), p. 2.
2. Terry Fenton and Karen Wilkin, Modern Painting in Canada: Major Movements in Twentieth Century Canadian Art (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1978), p. 12
3. Fenton p. 9.
4. Luckyj, Visions and Victories, p. 13, from the Forward to the Group of Seven inaugural exhibition (Toronto: Art Museum of Toronto, May 1920). Although James Wilson Morrice preceded Thomson and the Group of Seven as a Canadian Post-Impressionist, Morrice was an expatriate for much of his career. He did not endow the Canadian landscape with symbolic or nationalist significance, nor did he exert a strong influence on other Canadian painters. These are the elements that earn a place of distinction for Thomson and the Group of Seven within the Modernist Movement in Canada.
5. Members of the Group of Seven were particularly influenced by an exhibition of Scandinavian landscape painting which they saw in at the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo in 1913.
6. Fenton, p.13. Fenton explains that these attempts to combine modernism and nationalism were not entirely compatible since the nationalist aspirations drew away from the direct emotions created by form and colour.
7. Fenton, p. 11.
8. Luckyj, Visions and Victories, p. 13. Luckyj points out that despite this image of the Group of Seven as the pioneer artists of the north, Emily Carr actually preceded the Group of Seven Members with her sketching trips to Alaska in 1907 and Alert Bay in 1908. A.Y. Jackson's first trip to Georgian Bay was not until 1910 and Tom Thomson's first trip to Algonquin Park was in 1912.
9. Emily Carr, Emily Coonan, Prudence Heward, Bess Housser, Mabel Lockerby, Isabel McLaughlin, Mabel May, Lillias Torrance Newton, Sarah Robertson and Anne Savage were all members of the WAAC at the time of exhibiting with the Group of Seven. Kathleen Daly, Yvonne McKague, Kathleen Munn and Pegi Nicol exhibited at the WAAC. And Rody Kenny Courtice gave art

classes for a short time in the late 1930s.

10. During the 1920s, Arthur Lismer spoke on 'Colour', A.Y. Jackson on 'Modern Art' and J.E.H. MacDonald on 'Walt Whitman'.

11. These sketches, along with Jackson's diary from his 1927 expedition have been published in A.Y. Jackson: The Arctic 1927 (Moonbeam: Penumbra Press, 1982).

12. The WAAC also exhibited works by A.J. Casson and Frank Carmichael as well as Lawren Harris Jr. and Thoreau MacDonald. The WAAC has maintained a fond attachment to the members of the Group of Seven and in 1987, A.J. Casson, the last living member of the Group, was the guest of honour at the WAAC's Centennial celebrations.

13. A review of the December 1938 members' exhibition also referred to George Pepper, Peter Haworth and Bertram Brooker as 'Honorary Members'; each of these men had exhibited with the WAAC over a number of years. There is no listing of male honorary members, but it would appear that the WAAC solved the problem of involving men in this women's organization, and particularly members' exhibitions by conferring this title upon them.

14. This is according to a list contained in the 1915 Sculpture Exhibition file in the Art Gallery of Ontario Archives, as cited in Christine Boyanoski, Loring and Wyle: Sculptors' Legacy, (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1987), p.

18. The seven women were Winnifred Kingsford, Bessie Muntz, Beverley Robinson, Lady G.W. Ross (Mildred Peel), Mabel M. Stoodley, Frances Loring and Florence Wyle. Boyanoski traces the increase in the number of women sculptors back to the end of the nineteenth century in the United States, when art training in general became more accessible to women, and the growing popularity of small bronzes provided women with unprecedented opportunities in this area.

15. Boyanoski, Loring and Wyle, p. 18. Forty-one of the sixty-two works exhibited were by Loring or Wyle.

16. Estelle Kerr, "Toronto Women Sculptors" in Saturday Night, vol 27, June 20, 1914, p. 25

17. Kerr, p. 25. The reason Wallis is not included may be due to the fact that she resided in Paris while the other three sculptors had studios in Toronto.

18. Boyanoski, Loring and Wyle, p. 7.

19. Boyanoski, Loring and Wyle, p. 7.

20. Rodin was influenced by Michelangelo's Captives, unfinished works in which the figures are only partially carved from the block of marble.

21. Kerr, p. 25.

22. Boyanoski, Loring and Wyle, p. 3. The only specific works by Wyle referred to in Kerr's article are a medal designed with Loring for the CNE and the Fountain at the Chicago Museum of Art.

23. Rodin experimented at this time with creating effects of movement in sculpture by allowing his models to move freely and adopt their own poses.

24. The WAAC first sought to promote Wallis' work as early as 1905 when it made repeated attempts to have her sculpture purchased by the government. Dignam requested support from the NCWC in this effort, which led to a controversial confrontation within the Council. Despite strong opposition (opponents within the NCWC argued that it was not desirable to recommend a work of art simply because it was executed by a woman), Dignam and her allies won the support they requested in a vote of 66 to 34. A resolution asked the Dominion Government to consider the work of prominent Canadian women for purchase and drew attention to Miss Wallis' work. It was not until 1920 that the NGC recognized Wallis' contribution by purchasing one of her works - a small bronze statuette of a young child entitled Son Meilleur Jouet - from a joint exhibition of work by Wallis and her teacher Waldmann, at the WAAC in Toronto and the AAM in Montreal. The WAAC was the first to take up the cause of Wallis but not the only one; the NGC artist file on Wallis contains dozens of articles written over several decades extolling the virtues and international success achieved by Wallis and lamenting the lack of recognition which her work received in Canada. This remained so even after Wallis became the very first Canadian to receive the title of Sociétaire (full-member) of the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts in 1930 (Strong-Boag, p. 241-2).

25. After a successful reception at the Paris Salon of 1904, Mercury Charmed by his own Invention was brought to Canada and later donated by Wallis to her native city of Peterborough. This sculpture became the centre of controversy in 1936 when the Toronto Star (May 2, 1936) published an article stating that the sculpture was apparently misplaced. It is now located in the Central Museum in Peterborough.

26. WAAC, Annual Report 1915-16, p. 27.

27. WAAC, Annual Report 1917-18, p. 21.

28. Loring had exhibited her work previously at the OSA, RCA and CNE during a visit to Canada in 1908.

29. Soon after, Loring and Wyle held a joint show at the AMT, possibly the same one which had been held at the WAAC.

30. Tancock, p. 266. Rodin was inspired by partial remains of Greek and Roman sculpture and by the unfinished works of Michelangelo. Both Wyle and Rodin executed a number of torsos but Wyle's affinity with Rodin is particularly evident by comparing her marble Torso of 1932 (NGC) with Rodin's Torso of a Man (mid 1880s, Rodin Museum, Philadelphia).

31. Wyle became a WAAC member in 1920, the same year both she and Loring were elected members of the OSA and associates of the RCA. In 1938 Florence Wyle was elected a full Academician of the RCA, becoming the fourth woman, and the first woman sculptor, to receive this title. Loring became a full Academician in 1947.

32. Bertram Brooker, Yearbook of the Arts in Canada 1928-29, p. 104, as cited in Luckyj, Visions and Victories, p. 14.

33. Brooker, p.104.

34. Because the BHH was not formally structured, there is no definite membership list. Charles Hill (Canadian Painting in the Thirties) states that there are varying accounts of the memberships and gives three of these sources which combined, result in the following list of eighteen artists, ten of whom are women: Nora Collyer, Emily Coonan, Adrien Hébert, Henri Hébert, Prudence Heward, Randolph Hewton, Edwin Holgate, Mabel Lockerby, Mabel May, Kathleen Morris, Lillias Torrance Newton, Robert Pilot, Sarah Robertson, Albert Robinson, Anne Savage, Adam Sherriff Scott, Ethel Seath and Scoop Torrance.

35. Hill, p. 39.

36. Karen Antaki, Emily Coonan (1885-1971) (Montreal: Concordia Art Gallery, 1987), p. 17, states that it is debatable whether one of these women, Emily Coonan would have had the courage to continue her artistic pursuits without the inspiring instruction and staunch support which she received from Brymner. Referring to the significant number of prominent women artists who received instruction under Brymner, Antaki cites Nochlin's observation that, "of the small band of heroic women, who...despite obstacles, have achieved preeminence...they all, almost without exception, were either the daughters of artist fathers, or, generally later, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, had a close

personal connection with a stronger or more dominant artistic personality." (Nochlin, as quoted in Antaki, pp. 34-5, n. 13). But rather than dominating or influencing these women to their own detriment, Brymner encouraged them to find their own individual expressions; this is evinced by his advice to Coonan to "be yourself" (Antaki, p. 21), and more importantly, by the strong, varied and individual styles in the paintings by each of these women.

37. MacTavish, pp. 143-44.

38. Newton participated in other exhibitions at the WAAC including a solo exhibition of her portraits in April 1932 and the Portrait Exhibition by Canadian Women Artists in March 1937.

39. WAAC, Scrapbook 3.

40. Other artists to exhibit with the Montreal Women Painters were Anne Savage, Kathleen Morris, Mabel Lockerby, Ethel Seath and Nora Collyer (all former BHH members). All of the Montreal Women Painters became members of the WAAC, with the exception of Collyer and Seath.

41. Fenton, p. 52.

42. Emily Carr, Hundreds and Thousands: The Journals of Emily Carr (Toronto: Clark, Irwin and Company, 1966), p. 5.

43. Carr pp.6-7.

44. Paula Blanchard, The Life of Emily Carr (Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 1987), p. 184.

45. WAAC, Scrapbook 3, "Pottery and Weaving Attractive at C.N.E." (September 1933).

46. Doris Shadbolt, The Art of Emily Carr, Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd, p. 53.

47. See Luckyj, Visions and Victories, p. 26 for a listing of Carr's solo and group exhibitions.

48. Carr, p. 201.

49. Tippet, p. 230.

50. Graham Campbell McInnes, "World of Art" in Saturday Night vol. 51, no. 5, December 7, 1935, p. 27.

51. Works included pottery in the WAAC collection and paintings lent by C.S. Band and Douglas Duncan.

52. As a result of the drop in membership revenues as well as the operating costs and efforts to pay off the mortgage, the WAAC published condensed annual reports summarizing the activities during the years 1929-32.

53. Joyce Zemans et al, New Perspectives on Modernism in Canada: Kathleen Munn, Edna Tacon (Toronto: The Art Gallery of York University, 1988), p. 22.

54. Hill, p. 21.

55. Luckyj, Visions and Victories, p. 15 n. 36.

56. Luckyj, Visions and Victories, p. 15, n 32.

57. Mary E. MacLachlan, Paraskeva Clark: Paintings and Drawings (Halifax: Dalhousie Art Gallery, 1982), p. 22. The Spanish Civil War erupted in the Spring of 1936 when General Franco's Nationalist Forces began a series of attacks against the newly-elected Republican government. Bethune made frequent trips to Toronto looking for support to send a medical team to Spain to assist the Republican armies.

58. MacLachlan, p. 26.

59. Zemans, p. 8.

60. WAAC, Annual Report 1944-45, p. 10.

61. Zemans, p. 12.

62. Tacon's first solo exhibitions were held in the fall of 1941 at Studio 83 in New York and Eaton's Fine Arts Galleries in Toronto.

63. Zemans, p. 38.

Conclusion

"We are an anachronism"

Mrs. G.W.N. Fitzgerald
WAAC President (1)

As noted in the introduction, Canadian art historical literature has neglected to document the contribution made by the Women's Art Association of Canada and as a result, has effectively placed the organization outside mainstream Canadian art history. However, this prevalent view is not substantiated by the present documentation of the WAAC which reveals the central, even leading role played by the Association. Established in large measure to combat the restrictions of male-dominated professional art institutions, the WAAC supported and encouraged women artists by providing studio space, life classes, exhibition venues and employment opportunities. It is also clear that the WAAC was aware of the needs of the broader national scene, and as a result, many of their programs had far reaching impact, not only on the diverse needs of women artists but on the public as a whole.

This is certainly evident in the case of handicrafts. The major role played by the WAAC in the revival of handicrafts in Canada is soundly established by their consistent promotion of the design and production of

handicrafts among middle and upper class women and by their encouragement of the production of traditional, ethnic and native crafts. Their efforts provided employment opportunities for women, resulted in well-designed, high-quality products for the public, and challenged traditional views about the place of craft.

The WAAC exhibition program also had far-reaching effects. During the late nineteenth century, the exhibitions broke new ground by presenting work by women artists in major, high profile exhibitions, including those at Roberts' Art Galleries in Toronto. During the early twentieth century, the WAAC Foreign Picture Exhibitions presented the best of academic European art to the Canadian public, and although the fashion for the Dutch school would change in the wake of the campaign for nationalistic art led by the Group of Seven, these exhibitions reflected the popular public taste of the day.

The focus for the WAAC's response to nationalism can be found in their promotion of Canadian modernism. A close examination of the exhibition program in the years during the First and Second World Wars reveals the WAAC as a clear leader in the development of mainstream modernist Canadian art. These exhibitions presented work by many avant-garde artists, both women and men, often at strategic points in their artistic careers. This included: the first joint

exhibition by Frances Loring and Florence Wyle; the presentation of the Montreal Women Painters as women artists, distinct from the mixed groups of the BHM or CGP; Emily Carr's first solo exhibition in Toronto; the first solo exhibition for Isabel McLaughlin; the first public exhibition of work by Jack Bush; and the early presentation of Kathleen Munn's explorations into abstraction. The exhibition program during this period clearly indicates the WAAC's commitment to untested, innovative work.

Why then has the WAAC been excluded from Canadian art history? One reason for the lack of serious consideration may be the shift in focus within the WAAC after 1950 from an active involvement in art to passive philanthropy. As women artists gained recognition and acceptance from other institutions, both educational and exhibiting, the need for the WAAC was not as vital. One of the major aims of the WAAC had been to achieve recognition for women artists within the mainstream art institutions - "to attain as women a place in the art of our country". By the 1930s, this aim was coming into fruition. It is not surprising then that the role of the WAAC changed.

The result was a decline in membership which was compounded by the effects of two wars and the intervening Depression. By 1947 the WAAC consisted of eighteen

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professional members, thirty-five honorary members (as well as male artists such as A.Y. Jackson and Bertram Brooker, this category now included past active members such as Loring and Wyle, an indication of the fact that they were no longer actively involved), as well as 219 associate members.

The decrease in membership was particularly devastating as it affected the active members, who although outnumbered by the associate members, had played the stronger role in determining the WAAC's activities and direction. This was no longer the case. The associate membership was also affected during the succeeding years by the changing roles of women in general; more women were working, affording less time for volunteer work and club activities. Several branches had to close because they simply could not generate sufficient interest. But the associate members now directed the WAAC towards a more philanthropic support of the arts.

The WAAC drastically reduced its involvement in clubs and classes; only the Sketch Club and Saturday morning art classes under painter Dorothy Stevens continued into the 1950s. The WAAC felt that training for amateur and professional artists and artisans was now readily obtainable from vocational and technical schools as well as private studios. The exhibition program also experienced a sharp decline in activity. The few exhibitions which were held

included the annual Members', Sketch Club, and art class exhibitions. Energy which previously had been put into the progressive and innovative programs was now redirected towards philanthropic support of young and promising art students, notably through the establishment of scholarships.

In 1947, on the occasion of its Diamond Jubilee, the Association established the Mary E. Dignam Scholarship to be awarded annually to a third year student at the Ontario College of Art to cover the cost of tuition. Shortly later, additional scholarships were established for students of the Royal Conservatory of Music, National Ballet School and the Faculty of Music Performance at the University of Toronto, reflecting the diversified interests of the membership. In all four cases, the teaching institution would recommend a worthy recipient, which the WAAC committee would approve. Although sex was not outwardly stipulated as a qualification for the scholarships, the music and dance awards were given to women only. The Mary Ella Dignam Scholarship, although usually awarded to female students, has on occasion been presented to a male student.

The WAAC still feels bound by its original mandate of mutual help and encouragement in the arts, but it feels it can best do this through the scholarship program. The WAAC continues to hold occasional exhibitions by members and scholarship winners, and invited lecturers speak on art-

related topics, but the Scholarship program, which has been termed its "raison d'être"(2), serves as its primary contribution to the arts. The WAAC has become isolated from the art community of Toronto and Canada, operating as a private women's club.

This passive philanthropic participation in the arts of recent years has become the prevailing representation of the WAAC, overshadowing decades of active and vital participation. Another related aspect which has not been discussed is the WAAC as a social club. This paper has confined its discussion to the WAAC's contribution to Canadian art history, but the social aspect must be considered in terms of evaluating the criteria on which past assessments of the Associations have been based.

Art societies have traditionally been an important facet of an artist's development although this has been undervalued. It provided interaction between artists and encouraged the exchange of ideas within an informal social environment. Canadian art historian, Paul Duval has written:

It is a current fashion to play down the role that societies or groups may exert in helping establish the art of an individual or nation...Until the very recent past in Canada, artists depended upon societies to establish both their reputations and their markets. They banded together for mutual encouragement in an environment which was at best indifferent and at worst, hostile (3).

The fact that the WAAC was a women's social group compounded the tendency to marginalize the importance of its

contribution. The social aspect had been prominent among active and associate members since the early twentieth century, when music, drama and literature clubs were established in addition to art and handicraft clubs. Once the WAAC acquired its own home, the annual garden fete became a central event and combined all these interests in one grand production. Memorable events include the vignettes of 'Living sculpture', exhibitions of garden sculpture by Loring and Wyle, Shakespearean pageants and other dramatic productions (figs. 45-50).

That the social activities of the WAAC affected the public perception of its role was duly noted by Pearl McCarthy who wrote with tremendous insight into the nature of the WAAC in Saturday Night in October 1938:

At a quick look, the [WAAC] might seem a rather quiet affair, with a comfortable social angle. A more considered view provides a different picture of its work. Through this fashion of art and that, for more than half a century, the association has kept the claims and charms of visual art before a large group of people. Moreover, without extreme alliances, it has stood for a broad-minded attitude. By its own will, not waiting to be impelled by outside forces, it has raised the standards for its own professional members, as well as creating a taste for more intellectual exhibitions. Because all that has been done with a kind of drawing-room decorum, one is apt to underestimate its effect (4).

McCarthy wrote this article to congratulate the WAAC on its election of Frances Loring as its new president, but also to commend Loring for recognizing the worthy role of the WAAC. Loring succeeded Dignam who had returned as president

the previous year on the occasion of the WAAC's fiftieth anniversary. The WAAC had involved hundreds of artists and supporters of art, but its success was due in large to the visionary commitment of a few women. Most notable was Mary Ella Dignam, who from the time of the WAAC's formation in 1887 until her death in 1938, was the singular driving force behind the Association. Frances Loring, more than any other member, had the vision and leadership capabilities to carry on Dignam's work. Together with Florence Wyle who was in charge of exhibitions, she did much to keep the WAAC at the forefront of the art scene in Toronto into the 1940s.

Symbolically, in the hall as you enter the WAAC, there hangs a bronze plaque of Mary Ella Dignam, sculpted by Frances Loring, reminding future generations of her original mandate to provide help and encouragement for women artists, and the original motto - by labour and constancy.

An equally significant reason for the exclusion of the WAAC from mainstream Canadian art history is the selective process of history itself. In analyzing why many artists, particularly women, have been overlooked in the writing of history, Zemans astutely notes:

the dominant approach to early twentieth century Canadian art...tended to exclude from the record pluralistic individualism and diversity in favour of a reflection of a national cultural agenda (5).

The WAAC was pluralistic in its inclusion of artists and

artisans with a range of training and diversity of interests and gave them a forum in which to develop and exhibit their individual expressions. This begins to explain why Harper only mentions the WAAC in reference to the fashionable Dutch school of painting at the turn of the century, and Reid only mentions the WAAC in connection with the abstract painter Jack Bush. The WAAC cannot be compartmentalized into one pre-existing chapter in the history of Canadian art. And so it has been marginalized and excluded.

There are other exhibiting societies which have also been active for over a century, and whose contribution have been duly noted, but the WAAC, unlike the RCA and OSA who commissioned the writing of their own histories, has not taken to public recording of its own significance.

The final question is that of the ultimate fate of the Women's Art Association of Canada. The current president, Mrs. G.W.N. Fitzgerald has described the WAAC as an anachronism, organized at a time when women faced exclusion from full participation in art organizations, but drained of its vitality as the situation for which they fought began to be redressed; ultimately their success has led to their own demise.

But interest in Canadian women artists has mounted substantially over the past two decades, resulting in research and documentation of their contribution. This

recognition is part of a process begun in 1887. The WAAC, through its dedicated and pioneering work over the past century has earned a rightful place within Canadian art history. It has earned for women artists and for itself, a place in the art of our country.

Endnotes

1. Mrs. G.W.N. Fitzgerald, Interview, May 5, 1986.
2. WAAC, Annual Report 1984-85, p. 4.
3. Paul Duval, Four Decades: The Canadian Group of Painters and their Contemporaries 1930-1970. (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1972), p. 7.
4. Pearl McCarthy, "Art and Artists" in Saturday Night, October 31, 1938.
5. Zemans, p. 6.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Exhibition List

The following is a list of exhibitions held at the WAAC to 1987, listed according to the annual reports. Additional information has been taken from scrapbooks, catalogues and later annual reports as listed in parentheses.

1889-1890

Art Loan Exhibition, (1915-16 AR).
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1889.
Spring Exhibition, April 1890.

1890-1891

Ceramic Exhibition.
Sketch Club Exhibition, December 1890.
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1890.
Spring Exhibition, April 25-May 2 1891.

1891-1892

Ceramic Exhibition.
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1891.
Sketch Club Exhibition, May 1892.
Charlotte Schreiber Exhibition (1966-67 AR).
Spring Exhibition, Spring 1892.

1892-1893

Ceramic Exhibition, October 1892.
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1892.
Fifth Annual Spring Exhibition, March 1893 (scrapbook 1).

1893-1894

Ceramic Exhibition.
Sketch Club Exhibition, October 18-28, 1893 (catalogue).
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1893.
Sixth Annual Spring Exhibition, March 29, 1894.

1894-1895

Ceramic Exhibition.
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1894.
Seventh Annual Spring Exhibition, Spring 1895.

1895-1896

Ceramic Exhibition.
Sketch Club Exhibition, Fall 1895.
Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1895.
Eighth Annual Spring Exhibition, March 1896, held at
Robert's Art Galleries, Toronto (catalogue).

1896-1897

Ceramic Exhibition, October 25-30, 1896.

Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1896.

Ninth Annual Spring Exhibition, March 1-17, 1897, held at Robert's Art Galleries, Toronto (catalogue).

1897-1898

Ceramic Exhibition.

Annual Members' Exhibition, 1897.

The Toronto YMCA Exhibition, January 31-February 5, 1898.

Tenth Annual Spring Exhibition, April 19-30, 1898, held at Robert's Art Galleries, Toronto (catalogue).

1898-1899

Ceramic Exhibition, September 1898 (scrapbook 2).

Historic Dinner Set Exhibition.

Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1898.

Sketch Club Exhibition, December 1898 (scrapbook 2).

Loan Portrait Exhibition, April 3-15, 1899 (catalogue).

Spring Exhibition.

1899-1900

Ceramic Exhibition, October 1899.

Exhibition of handicrafts and art industries (1916 AR).

Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1899.

Twelfth Annual Exhibition of Members' Work and Loaned Work, February 22-March 8, 1900 (catalogue).

Loan Handicraft Exhibition, March 1900.

1900-1901

Ceramics Exhibition, October 1900.

Christmas Exhibition and Sale of Pictures, December 1900.

Loan Exhibition of Paintings and Craft Work from the Arts and Crafts Association, London England (1916 AR).

Thirteenth Annual Spring Exhibition, March 27-April 13, 1901 (catalogue).

Exhibition of Pictures, Sketches and Ceramics, Summer 1901.

1901-1902

Exhibition of Paintings and Sketches, December 7 - January 4, 1902 (catalogue).

Special Exhibition of Dutch and Scotch Pictures, March 10-22, 1902 (catalogue).

1902-1903

Second Exhibition of Foreign Pictures, November 17-December 27, 1902

Handicraft Exhibition, January 1903.

Handicraft Exhibition, May 1903.

CNE Exhibition, Women's Building, Summer 1903.

1903-1904

Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1903.
 Special Exhibition of Dutch Watercolours,
 January 18-February 13, 1904 (catalogue).

1904-1905

Annual Members' Exhibition, December 1904.
 Foreign Paintings - Dutch and Scotch, December 8, 1904-
 January 14, 1905 (catalogue).
 Annual Exhibition of Oils, Watercolours, Ceramics,
 Handicrafts with a special exhibit of rare old lace
 February 18-28 1905.(catalogue).
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1905.

1905-1906

Special Exhibition of the Art of the Netherlands,
 November 11 -January 1, 1906 (catalogue).
 Annual Members' Exhibition.
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1906.

1906-1907

Special Exhibition of Foreign Pictures, November 21-December
 5, 1906, held at the NGC,(catalogue).
 Annual Members Exhibition, February 1907.
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1907.

1908-1909

Special Exhibition of the Art of Scotland and the
 Netherlands, November 23-December 31, 1908 (catalogue).
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1909.

1909-1910

Exhibition of Foreign and Loan Pictures, December 14, 1909-
 January 8, 1910 (catalogue).
 Spring Exhibition, March 1910.
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1910.

1910-1911

Exhibition of Home Industries, Embroideries and Lace made by
 Canadian Women, January 1911.
 Foreign Exhibition, January 1911.
 Spring Exhibition, Spring 1911.
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1911.

1912-1913

Christmas Exhibition and Sale of Arts and Crafts, December
 1912.
 Exhibition of Foreign and Canadian Pictures, February 1913.
 Exhibition of Home Industries, March 1913.
 Members' Exhibition, April, 1913.

1913-1914

The All-Canadian Loan Exhibition of Pictures; Members' Exhibition; Arts and Crafts Exhibition (three exhibitions held together).

Exhibition of Home Industries, Crafts, Sculpture and Design held in the Applied Arts Building at the CNE.

Four Canadian Women Sculptors.

Weekly solo exhibitions - Mary Ella Dignam

Miss L.O. Adams

Gertrude Spurr Cutts

Miss Hancock

Miss Drummond

1914-1915

Members' Exhibition, December 1914.

Weekly solo exhibitions.

Exhibition of Crafts and Home Industries in the Applied Arts Building at the CNE.

1915-1916

Exhibition and Sale of works of the Craft Clubs.

Weekly solo exhibitions

- Mary Ella Dignam, Sketches of Muskoka and Studies of Flowers.

- Marion Long

- Mary Wrinch, Studies of Canadian Scenery and of her travels to Italy.

-Mr. Olis

-J.E.H. Macdonald

-Miss Florence McGillivray

Summer Exhibition of Home Industries, July-August 1916.

1916-1917

Members' Exhibition.

Solo Exhibitions -Florence MacGillivray.

- Mary Ella Dignam.

1917-1918

Christmas Arts and Crafts Exhibition, December, 1917.

Professor A.P. Coleman's World Travels and Sketches.

Professor J.W.F. Harrison's Canadian Sketches in Watercolour.

Exhibit of Sculpture by Frances Loring and Florence Wyle.

Loan Exhibition of Etchings and Paintings by Lorenzi Lorenzo of Assisi.

Famous Reproductions in colour and black and white of Shakespeare's Works, consisting of etchings, engravings, and old prints, etc.

Watercolour and Figure Sketches by Auguste Rodin.

Summer Exhibition of Members' Work, Summer, 1918.

1918-1919

Cartoons by Mr. R.E. Johnston.
 Loan of Foreign Women Members' Work.
 Sculpture by Mr. Alfred Howels.
 Christmas Exhibit of Members' Work in Art and Crafts,
 December 1918.
 Photographs by Mrs. Minna Keene, F.R.P.S.
 Graphic Arts Society Exhibit.
 Watercolours by Mrs. G.A. Shaw.
 Summer Exhibit of Members' Work from all over Canada, Summer
 1919.
 Batik by Mrs. Deeble.
 Bookbinding by members of the Bookbinding Club under Miss
 Ethel Taylor.
 Lace by Mrs. Porteous.

1919-1920

Solo Exhibitions by Canon Green Carl Ahrens.
 Members' Exhibition, December 1919.
 Solo Exhibitions - Mary Wrinch
 - Dorothy Stevens
 - Miss Alice Ronner of Belgium
 - Mary Ella Dignam
 - Mrs. Spragge

1921-1922

The Work of the Society of Painter-Etchers.
 Paintings by Marion Long.
 Exhibition and Demonstration by Craft Workers.
 Members' December Exhibition, December 1921.
 Autumn Tree Pictures by Mary Ella Dignam.
 Charlotte County Cottage Crafts.
 Solo exhibition by Helen Mowat.
 Antiques and Objects of Art of Remote Countries, March, 1922.
 Sculpture by Frances Loring and Florence Wyle, March 1922.
 Sketches in Oils by Mrs. Frederick Coates.
 Miniatures and Watercolours by Mrs. Drummond Cooper.
 Members' Summer Exhibition, Summer 1922.

1922-1923

Paintings by Estelle Kerr.
 Members' December Exhibition of Arts and Crafts, December
 1922.
 Japanese Paintings by Joshida Sekido from Tokyo, Japan.
 Bermuda Pictures by Miss M. Cary MacConnell.
 Scarboro Bluffs by Mrs. Frederick Coates.
 Dutch Pictures by Mary Ella Dignam.
 Members' Summer Exhibition, Summer 1923.
 CNE Exhibition, Summer 1923.

1923-1924

Ukrainian Crafts, October 20-26, 1923.

Painting after the Primitive Influence, by Miss Lorna Reid,
October 29-November 10, 1923.

Decorative Paintings and Batiks by Miss Buell and Miss Davidson.

Painting by Miss F.H. MacGillivray, November 13-24, 1923.

Members' December Exhibition of Crafts and Small Pictures,
December 1923.

Cartoons of Stained Glass Windows and Pottery by Mr. and Mrs. Peter Haworth.

Sculptors' Exhibition, arranged by Frances Loring.

Group Exhibition by Five Montreal Women Painters - Lillias Torrence Newton, H. Mabel May, Sarah Robertson, Emily Coonan, and Anne Savage.

Branch Members' Exhibition.

Retrospective Exhibition of Canadian Women Artists, March 1924.

1924-1925

Portraits by Dorothy Vicaji of London, England, November 3-15, 1924.

Paintings by Marion Jack, November 17-29, 1924.

Members' December Exhibition of Crafts and Small Pictures,
December 1924.

Paintings by A.Y. Jackson, January 1925.

Paintings by Ruston Vicaji of London, England.

Autumn Pictures by Mary Ella Dignam.

Group Exhibition of Montreal Women Painters.

Solo exhibition by Mrs. Miller.

Sculptors' Exhibition arranged by Frances Loring.

Solo exhibition by Thoreau MacDonald.

International Group Exhibition - Ruth Payne Burgess, Mrs. Van Wyck, Alethea Platt of New York; Mary Ella Dignam, Katrina Buell of Toronto; Alice Ronner of Belgium; Marie Wijtjers of Holland; Dorothy Vicaji of London, England; Emily Paterson of Scotland, March 23-April 6, 1925 (WAAC catalogue).

Exhibition of Canadian Arts and Crafts, arranged for the International Congress of Women, April 29, 1925.

Exhibition of Canadian Home Industries at Wembley, April 1925.

CNE Display of Arts and Crafts and Ceramics, August 1925.

1925-1926

Paintings by Mary Ella Dignam, November 4, 1925.

Solo exhibition by George T. Hamilton, November 20, 1925.

Members' December Exhibition of Crafts and Small Pictures,
December 1925.

Work of the New Mexico Indians arranged by Miss Elsie
Louden.

Paintings by J.E.H. MacDonald.

Group Exhibition of Montreal Women Painters.

Garden Sculpture by Frances Loring and Others, June 16-18,
1926.

Ceramic Exhibition.

Pictures Loaned by Mrs. F.D. Mercer.

1926-1927

Solo exhibitions by- Mr. John Wentworth Russell, October 20,
1926.

- Mrs. Mina Keene, October 20, 1926.

- Mary Ella Dignam - Notes of her Travel,
November 17, 1926.

Members' Exhibition of Crafts and Small Pictures, December
1926.

Solo exhibition by - Mary Wrinch Reid.

- Kathleen Munn.

- Dorothy Stevens.

Group Exhibition.

Sculpture Exhibition.

Ceramic and Pottery Exhibition.

Poster Exhibition lent by Mr. Frank Yeigh.

CNE Exhibition, August 1927.

1927-1928

Members' December Exhibition, December 2-24, 1927 (WAAC
notice).

A.Y. Jackson's Baffin Island Sketches.

Madame Boutadini's English and Italian Watercolours.

Architectural Exhibition:-Javanese Batiks loaned by Mrs.
Hermine Deeble.

Flower Exhibition by Members and Invited Exhibitors
(paintings of flowers).

Hocked Rugs from all the Provinces of Canada.

CNE Exhibition of Fine and Applied Arts.

1928-1931 (Condensed Annual Report)

Members' Exhibition, December 1928 (WAAC notice).

Petunia and Other Flower Paintings by Katrina Buell, March 4-16, 1929 (WAAC catalogue).

Members' Exhibition, December 1929 (scrapbook 3).

Exhibition by Montreal Women Painters - Prudence Heward, Anne Savage, Sarah Robertson, Mabel May, Lillias Torrance Newton, Ethel Seath, Mabel Lockerby, Kathleen Morris, Bess Housser and K.S. Buell, February 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Arts and Crafts Exhibition February 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Sculpture Exhibition-Frances Loring, Florence Wyle, Elizabeth Wyn Wood and Merle Foster June 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Nature Studies by Lady (E.M.) Windle October 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Sculpture by Katherine Wallis of Paris, November 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Mrs. E. Cecil Evans of London, England, 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Pastels by Marjorie FitzGibbon, March 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Photographs by J.H. MacKay, March 1930 (scrapbook 3).

Exhibition by Honorary Members A.Y. Jackson, Lawren Harris, J.E.H MacDonald and Arthur Lismer. January 1931.

Exhibition from the Graphic Art Society of Vienna.

Etchings and Watercolours by Cecilia MacKinnon of Paris.

1931-1932

Solo Exhibitions by - Elizabeth Adams, Toronto.

- Florence MacGillivray, Ottawa.

- Melita Aitkins, Victoria.

- Cecilia MacKinnon, Paris France.

- Mary Ella Dignam, Toronto.

- Dorothy Stevens, Toronto.

Joint Exhibitions by - Mr. and Mrs. Pepper, Ottawa.

- Frances Loring and Florence Wyle.

Group Exhibition by A. Y. Jackson, J. E. H. MacDonald, Lawren Harris, Arthur Lismer, 1931.

Sculpture Exhibition by Frances Loring, Florence Wyle, Emanuel Hahn and Elizabeth Wyn Wood, April 1931.

Portraits by Lillias Torrance Newton, April 1931 (scrapbook 3).

Members' Exhibition, December 1931 (scrapbook 3).

CNE Exhibition, August 1932.

1932-1933

Architectural Drawings by Raymond Card, October 22, 1932.

Watercolours by Florence MacGillivray, November 26, 1932.

Members' December Exhibition of Paintings and Craft
December 3, 1932.

Watercolours by Cecilia MacKinnon, January 4, 1933.

Exhibition by Toronto Group of Etchers, January 25, 1933.

Handicrafts Exhibition - Fabrics from Ontario and Quebec
(Scrapbook 3).

Exhibition by all Branch Associations, March 1933.

Annual Exhibition of Home Industries and Crafts, Summer
1933.

1933-1934

Pastels of Chinese Temples by Miss Hattie MacCurdy of
China, October 10-21, 1933.

Handicrafts of the Grenfell Labrador Mission, October 29,
1933.

Oil Paintings by Lady Windle, November 4, 1933.

Exhibit of Bookbindings, Illuminations and Book Plates,
November 4, 1933.

Flower Paintings by Mrs. Beatrice Robertson, November 16-28,
1933.

Members' December Exhibition of Crafts, Small Pictures and
Sculpture, December 1933.

Historical Landscapes and Flowers by J.W.F. Harrison, January
23-February 14, 1934.

Paintings by Kathleen Daly and George Pepper, January 23-
February 14, 1934.

Branch Associations' Exhibition of Paintings, March 21-April
4, 1934.

Perkins Bull Collection of Peel County, May 1934.

CNE Exhibition, August 1934.

1934-1935

Sculpture and Watercolours by Katherine Wallis, October 15-
22, 1934.

Etchings by Caroline Armington, October 15-22, 1934.

Grenfell Labrador Mission Handicrafts, October 26-27, 1934.

Mary Ella Dignam/Miss L.O. Adams, October 31-November 14, 1934

Lady Windle's Canadian Sketches, November 17-28, 1934.

Members' December Exhibition of Crafts, Sculpture and Small
Pictures, December 1-22, 1934.

Collection of Small Paintings by an Ottawa Family - Mary,
Ruth, and Charles Eliot, January 1935 (scrapbook 3).

Paintings by Isobel McLaughlin, January 1935.

Display of Pottery and Wrought Iron, February 1935
(scrapbook 3).

Branch Associations' Exhibition, March 1935.

Paintings by J.W.F. Harrison, March 1935.

1935-1936

Grenfel, Labrador Medical Mission Handicrafts, October 1935.
 Mrs. Dignam - Flower Paintings, fall/winter 1935.
 Lady Windle - Summer Sketches, fall/winter 1935.
 Emily Carr - Tree Paintings, fall/winter 1935.
 Members' Annual Exhibition of Arts and Crafts, December 1935.
 Exhibition of modern photographs by J.H. McKay, December 1935.
 Arthur Lismer and A.Y. Jackson, Honorary Members-
 Paintings, winter/spring 1936.
 Bertram Brooker and Kathleen Munn - Drawings, winter/spring 1936.
 Annual Exhibition of Paintings by Branch Members April, 1936.

1936-1937

Paintings by Marion Hawthorne, Montreal and Miss Marjorie
 Fitz-Gibbon of Toronto, November 1936.
 Members' Annual Exhibition of Arts and Crafts, December 1936.
 Posters and Drawings by Charles Comfort, January 1937.
 Drawings by Bertram Brooker, January 1937.
 International Society of Women Painters and Sculptors,
 February 8-25 1937 (scrapbook 3)
 Portrait exhibition by Canadian Women Artists, March 1937.
 Annual Branch Members' exhibition of Painting, March 1937.

1937-1938

Eleven Montreal Women Painters - Lockerby, Savage, Scott,
 Heward, Seath, Collyer, November 3-22, 1937 (scrapbook
 4).
 Gordon Webber solo exhibition, November 1937 (scrapbook 4).
 Annual Members' Exhibition, November 29-December 23
 (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibition of Paintings by Marion Long and Charles Goldhammer
 January 1938 (scrapbook 4).
 Dora Wechsler - Ceramic Satires: small satirical figures,
 May 1938 (scrapbook 4).

1938-1939

- Memorial Exhibition of Paintings by Mary Ella Dignam, October 1938 (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibition of Paintings by A.J. Casson and Frank Carmichael, November 1938 (scrapbook 4).
 Annual Members Exhibition, December 3-23, 1938 (scrapbook 4).
 Group Exhibition - Dorothy Stevens, Pegi Nicol, L.A.C. Panton, Bertram Brooker, Edwin Holgate and A.Y. Jackson January, 1939 (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibition of works by Lawren Harris Jr., February 13 1939 (scrapbook 4).
 Women Sketch Hunters of Alberta - Watercolours, February 13, 1939 (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibition in aid of Spanish orphans, February 20-25, 1939 (scrapbook 4).
 Flower Paintings by Clara Hagarty, March 1 (scrapbook 4).
 Landscapes and Waterfront scenes by Dorothy Hoover, March 1 (scrapbook 4).
 CNE Exhibition - exhibitors included Emily Carr, Florence Wyle, Thoreau McDonald, Jacobine Jones, Katherine E. Wallis, August 25-September 9 (scrapbook 4 and WAAC catalogue).

1939-1940

- Annual December Exhibition, December 1939 (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibit of Paintings by A.Y. Jackson loaned from private collectors including Sir Frederic Banting, Mrs. Edmund Boyd, Mrs. C.S. Band and others, January 1940, (scrapbook 4).
 Montreal Women Painters- Anne Savage, Sarah Robertson, Jori Smith, Mabel Lockerby, Lillias Torrence Newton and Prudence Heward, February 12 (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibition of Sculpture -11 exhibitors including Elizabeth Wyn Wood, Frances Loring, Florence Wyle, Jacobine Jones, Emanuel Hahn, Donald Stewart, Eugenia Berlin, Stephen Trenka, March (scrapbook 4).
 Exhibition of Pottery by Canadian Guild of Potters, May (scrapbook 4).

1940-1941

Group of Toronto Artists - A.Y. Jackson, George Pepper, Kay Daly, Dorothy Austin, Bertram Brooker, Frank Carmichael, L.A.C. Panton and several others

Fashion Show by Spinners and Weavers of Ontario, late fall.

Members Exhibition of Paintings, Sculpture, Arts and Crafts, December

Solo exhibition by - A.J. Casson, January 1941.

- Leonard Brooks - snow scenes, February 1941.

Group of Women artists of Toronto, March 1941.

Exhibition of Pottery and Weaving arranged by the Canadian Guild of Potters and The Spinners and Weavers of Ontario, May.

Branch Members' Exhibition, May.

Watercolours by the late A.P. Coleman of the University of Toronto, June.

Exhibition by the WAAC Art Classes, June.

First solo exhibition in Toronto for Fred Brigden, R.C.A., July 19 1941.

1941-1942

Solo exhibition by Cavin Atkins - watercolours and oils, Fall 1941.

Peter Haworth's Watercolours, November (scrapbook 4).

Annual Craft Exhibition, December.

Exhibition of Emily Carr Paintings lent by C.S. Band and Douglas Duncan, and pottery in the collection of the WAA, December 20 (scrapbook 4).

Paintings by Murray Bonnycastle, January-February 1942.

Joint exhibition - oils and watercolours by William Winter and oils and drawings by Bob Ross, February 26 - March

Annual exhibition of handicrafts with the Spinners and Weavers of Ontario and the Canadian Guild of Potters

Exhibition by WAAC Art Classes, June.

Paintings by Herbert Palmer, summer.

1942-1943

Paintings by Isabel McLaughlin, October 1942.

Watercolours of Vancouver Island by Mrs. J. Calder Waugh, November 15-30.

Annual Craft Exhibition, December.

Pictures by Kay Daly, George Pepper and A.Y. Jackson, January 1943.

Exhibition of Church embroideries and furnishings, March 16-24.

46th Annual Exhibition - 108 works, April 22-May 8 (catalogue)

Exhibition by Mrs. Proctor, Estelle Kerr, Phillip Hall, April-May.

Exhibition by WAAC Art Classes, June.

1943-1944

Watercolours by Florence Mortimer of Edmonton, September 1943 (scrapbook 5).
 Sculpture by Jacobine Jones and Watercolours by Paraskeva Clark, November (scrapbook 5).
 Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition, December (scrapbook 5).
 Exhibition of Old and Rare Lace, March, 1944 (scrapbook 5).
 Exhibition by Branch Members, May (scrapbook 5).

1944-1945

Oils and prints by Mary Wrinch Reid, October 1944.
 Exhibition by Edna Taçon.
 Canadian Painter Etchers.
 Exhibition of Boxes and Fans lent by Members and their Friends.
 Paintings by Branch Members.
 Exhibition of work by Saturday Morning Art Classes, June, 1945.

1945-1946

York Wilson and Jack Bush, October 1945 (WAAC Notice).
 Solo Exhibition by William Newcombe, January 1946 (scrapbook 5).

1946-1947

Joint Exhibition - Prints by Mary E. Wrinch and Sylvia Hahn, October 1946.
 Group Exhibition - Paintings by branch members, November 1946.
 Christmas Exhibition, December 1946.

1947-1948

Oil sketches by Lady Edith Windle.
 Oils by Francis Neal done in the Rockies.
 Watercolours done in the Arctic by Mrs. Donald Marsh.
 Craft Exhibition.
 Exhibition of Saturday Morning Art Classes.

1948-1949

Small oil sketches by Lady Edith Windle.
 Works by Scholarship Winner Dorothy Greenberg.
 Paintings by York Wilson and W.A. Winter.
 Annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition, December 1948.
 Large watercolours of flowers by Ann Sanders, Spring 1949.
 Craft Exhibition, Spring.
 Exhibition of Saturday Morning Art Classes, June.

1949-1950

Exhibition by Scholarship Winner Jane Lippert, Fall/Winter 1949.

Large Watercolour Show by John Ensor, Fall/Winter.

Photographs of Prominent People by Violet Keene, Fall/Winter.

Second Exhibition of Watercolours by John Ensor, Fall/Winter.

Craft Exhibition, November.

Photographs by Harold MacKay, December.

Craft Exhibition, May 1950.

Sculpture by Frances Loring and Florence Wyle, May.

Exhibition by Saturday Morning Art Class, June.

1950-1951

Permanent Collection, fall 1950.

Exhibition of twenty paintings from Saskatchewan branch.

Watercolour Exhibition by Sascha Jane Patterson, December, 1950 - February, 1951.

Picture Exhibition in oils by John O'Henly.

1951-1952

Exhibition of Paintings by members of the Sketch Club, March 1952.

Exhibition and Sale of Crafts, Spring 1952.

1953-1954

Exhibition by Emile Gruppe of Gloucester, Mass, January 1954.

Demonstration by Stanley Moyer of Mexican material done in San Miguel de Allende, March 1954.

1954-1955

Exhibition of Paintings by Scholarship Winner Barbara Markham, March 1955.

Sketch Group Exhibition of Paintings and Handicrafts, April.

1955-1956

Exhibition of Paintings by Mrs. Ethel Allison, March 1956.

Exhibition of works by Scholarship winner Dorothy Sperry, March 1956.

1956-1957

Annual Members Exhibition, December 1956.

Paintings by Hilton Hassell (46 works), February 18-23, 1957 (WAAC catalogue).

Lillian McGeoch, March 1957.

1957-1958

Sketch Club Exhibition, December 1957.

Audrey McNaughton exhibition - works of her trip to Labrador and Newfoundland, January 1958.

Works by Mrs. J. McCrae and Mrs. H.B. Carlaw, 1958.

1958-1959

Works by John Alfsen, October 1958.

Sketch Club Exhibition (50 works exhibited including Lillian McGeoch, Zelma Murphy, Winnifred Kerr, Gladys Carlaw, Anne Hess, C. Saddington, Elva Grant, Marjorie Lepage, Helen Renolds) December.

Doris McCarthy - watercolours, casein and oils, December-January.

Members Exhibition, 1959.

Children's Art Work, 1959.

1959-1960

Exhibition by Art Classes, Autumn 1959.

Annual Sketch Club Exhibition, December.

Exhibition of three scholarship winners from OCA - Annemarie Wieser, Libby Altwerger and Patricia Brennan, February 1960.

Madame Lea Chapon - visiting French painter, Spring.

Children's Art Exhibition", Spring.

1960-1961

Sketch Club Exhibition, May 1961.

Children's Art Exhibition, May 1961.

1962-1963

Annual Sketch Club Exhibition, - Marian Allen, Selfie Blakely, Nora Bonn, Win Charlesworth, Diane Christopher, Joan Hoadley, Winnifred Kerr, Greta Lillie, Queenie McCrea, Lillian McGeoch, Helen Reynolds, Victoria Strangways, Nora Welland, Alice Vaisey, December 1962 (WAAC catalogue).

Works by Scholarship Winner Vicki Land, May 1963.

1963-1964

Sketch Club Exhibition - Nora Welland, Vicki Strangways, Queenie McCrea, Elsie Hutchinson, Winnifred Kerr, Lillian McGeoch, Liz Morison, April 1964 (WAAC catalogue).

Exhibition by Scholarship Winner Mr. Lynn Wong, April 1964.

1964-1965

Works by Scholarship Winner June Drutz, April 1965.

Work by Art Class Students, June 1965.

1965-1966

Exhibition by Scholarship Winner Joseph Halmy, 1966.

1966-1967

Charlotte Schreiber Exhibition - 70 works, April 1967.

1967-1968

Members' Exhibition, Autumn 1967.

Members' Exhibition, Winter 1967/1968.

Paintings by Members including Mrs. McGeoch, Mrs. Moore
and Mrs. G. Rawson, February 1968.

Exhibition by Mrs. Lilian McGeoch, March 1968.

1968-1969

Solo Exhibition by Mrs. Lillian McGeoch, March 1969.

1969-1970

Exhibition by Branch Members, November 1969.

1971-1972

Barker Fairley Exhibition, May 21-June 4, 1972 (catalogue).

1974-1975

Exhibition by members and outstanding women artists and
craftswomen to commemorate International Women's Year,
October 20-27, 1974.

Paintings by Doris Huestis Speirs.

1975-1976

Drawings and Paintings by Scholarship Winner Annetta
Weirnek, 1976.

1977-1978

Elizabeth Lowes Young, 1977.

Lillian McGeoch, 1977.

Doris Richardson, 1977.

Joint Show by Two Members, Fall 1977.

Club Show by Seven Members, December 1977.

Exhibition by Scholarship Winner Eileen Orr, May 1978.

1978-1979

A Major Exhibition of paintings by portrait artist Barbara
Braunoehler, May 1979.

1979-1980

Watercolours by Joan Jamison, 1979.

Exhibition of paintings by Scholarship Winner Donna Ramsay,
May 1980.

1980-1981

Mini exhibitions of paintings held each month by different artist members.

Exhibition of paintings and crafts by members, Fall, 1980.

1981-1982

Mini exhibitions of paintings held each month by different artist members.

Exhibition of paintings and small bronze sculptures by Mrs. R. McGeoch in honour of her 30th year as a member, October 1981.

1984-1985

Exhibition by Scholarship winners Miss Reed Weir and Daniel Perry.

1985-1986

Paintings by artist members.

1986-1987

Centennial Gallery Exhibitions - Barbara Braunoehler, Hanna Hahlo, Doris Huestis Speires, Joan Jamison, Connie Johnson, Gail LaBoute Smith, Gerry Lazare, Setsuko Lazare, Queenie McCrea, Lillian McGeoch, Marjorie Moser, Olive Munro, Mary-Lou Payzaut, Alice Rycroft, William Sherman.

Appendix B: WAAC Presidents

1887-1914	Mrs. Mary Ella Dignam
1914-1916	Mrs. F.D. (Margaret) Mercer
1916-1918	Mrs. J. Home (Elizabeth) Cameron
1918-1924	Mrs. A.C. (Eleanor) McKay
1924-1925	Mrs. F.D. (Margaret) Mercer
1925-1930	Mrs. Dunnington Grubb
1930-1931	Mrs. A.C. (Eleanor) McKay
1931-1935	Mrs. Charles Nasmith
1935-1938	Mrs. Mary Ella Dignam
1938-1940	Miss Frances Loring
1940-1947	Mrs. A.C. Mackie
1947-1952	Mrs. John H. (Josephine) Harper
1952-1955	Mrs. T.H. (Marion) Hancock
1955-1958	Mrs. W.A. (Donalda) Duncan
1958-1961	Mrs. DeBruno (Dorothy Stevens) Austin
1961-1963	Mrs. S.D. (Gladys) Rendall
1963-1965	Miss E. Hazel Sinclair
1965-1968	Mrs. F.S. (Kathleen) Rivers
1968-1970	Mrs. John (Jessica) Dryburgh
1970-1975	Mrs. Roy T. (Virginia) Bogle
1975-1977	Miss Eleanor Halliday
1977-1982	Mrs. G.H (Annabel) Rawson
1982- present	Mrs. G.W.N. (Evelyn) Fitzgerald

Appendix C: WAAC Branches

The dates of Canadian Branches compiled from the branch reports appearing in the Annual Reports of the WAAC.

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Branches</u>
1894-1895, 1902-1907	London
1894-1895	Winnipeg
1894-1904	Montreal
1895-present	Hamilton
1895-1907	St. Johns
1896-1904	Brockville
1896-present	St. Thomas
1897-1916	Kingston
1897-1904	Portage La Prairie
1898-1923	Ottawa
1904-1978	Peterborough
1910-present	Owen Sound
1911-1919	Edmonton
1920-1927	Sudbury
1922-1925	Welland
1926-1931	Brandon Art Club
1931-1937	Saskatoon
1931-1947	Saskatchewan
1931-present	Oshawa
1951-1955	Regina

Appendix D: WAAC Constitution

"Labore et Constantia"

**Founded April 1890
1892.**

Incorporated, June

**Objects, Constitution and Rules.
Amended and Adopted at Annual Meeting,
Oct. 7th, 1895.**

OBJECTS.

The objects of the Association are the encouragement and promotion of more general interest in Original Art in this country, and more especially for the mutual help and co-operation of women who are either artists or lovers of Art; the holding of exhibitions and lectures upon subjects pertaining to Art. It shall also be the aim of the Association to form Branch Associations in other places, and, by contributing to any exhibitions which these Branches may undertake, encourage every effort to awaken interest in the public at large, advancing by greater unity of thought and purpose, through the more intimate knowledge of one another's work, the good of both the individual and the community. It will also be the aim of the Association and its Branches to provide rooms for its members where they can work together from models at times agreed upon by those members who wish to avail themselves of such opportunities for study.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

Article I. - Membership.

Section 1.- There shall be two classes of membership, Professional and Honorary. Professional members shall consist of such women who as artists and serious students may be acceptable to and are willing to subscribe to the objects of the Association, and to pledge themselves to co-operate with one another in the undertakings of the Association.

Honorary Members shall consist of ladies who are interested in the promotion of Art matters. They shall have a vote at the regular monthly and at annual meetings through their representatives and have free admittance to all exhibitions.

Section 2.- Candidates for membership must be proposed by one of the Professional Members or Honorary Members' representatives at a regular monthly meeting, and a vote

shall be taken by ballot at the next ensuing regular meeting, two third affirmative vote of the members present being necessary for election; upon notification by the Secretary, and receipt of the fee, the candidate's name will be enrolled.

Article II. - Fees.

Section 1.- All annual fees are due on the first Monday in October of each year. Fee for Professional Resident Members, \$5.00; for Professional Non-Resident, \$1.00; for Patronesses and Honorary Members, \$1.00.

Section 2.- Any person may become an Honorary Life Member or Patroness by the payment of \$20 at any one time.

Article III. - Officers.

The Officers shall consist of a President, first and second Vice-Presidents, ex-officio Vice-Presidents (the Presidents of all Branch Associations); a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer.

No Officers of this Association or its Branches shall be paid, or no paid instructor employed.

Article IV. - Duties of Officers.

Section 1.- The President shall preside at all meetings and conduct the meetings by the prescribed Order of Business.

Section 2.- The Vice-Presidents shall in the absence of the President act for the President.

Section 3.- The Recording Secretary shall keep a correct record of all meetings, of all motions and resolutions; and report the proceedings at monthly and annual meetings, and send out all notices of meetings.

Section 4.- The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence, read the roll-call, and keep a correct list of members and Branches, and give a full report of each monthly and annual meeting, and attend to all printing.

Section 5.- The Treasurer shall receive, collect, hold and receipt for all moneys of the Association, disbursing the same by order of the President, and shall render a complete report in writing at each monthly and annual meeting.

Article V. - Meetings

Section 1.- The annual meeting shall take place in Toronto on the first Monday of October. At this meeting a full statement of the affairs of the Association shall be presented by the Officers, and the election for the ensuing year take place. The Honorary members shall be notified to attend the meeting and elect representatives (one for every twenty five members), who shall with the professional members

attend the monthly meetings of the Association and vote.

Section 2.- Monthly meetings shall be held during the first week of each month from September to May inclusive.

Section 3.- Monthly meetings shall be Executive Meetings.

Section 4.- The Executive shall consist of the officers of the Association, and the heads of Committee and Honorary Members' representatives.

Section 5.- The Executive has full power to deal with all matters concerning the Association and its Branches, except in local matters not affecting the whole Association, in which Branches have power to arrange for themselves.

Section 6.- Special meetings shall be called at any time by the Secretary at the request of the President, when the business to come up must be stated in the notification.

Quorum.- At monthly meetings of the Society, five shall be a quorum. At annual meetings eight.

Article VI. - Order of Business at Meetings.

1. The Roll-Call.
2. Reading of minutes of previous meeting.
3. Correspondence, read and considered.
4. New Members proposed.
5. Accounts, Treasurer's report.
6. Unfinished business, or notices of motion.
7. General business.

Article VII. - Resolutions.

All resolutions and motions shall be presented to the Secretary in writing.

Article VIII.

The Constitution and By-laws may be altered or amended by a majority vote at any annual meeting, notice thereof being sent to each member, before the previous monthly meeting.

Article IX.- Committees.

Committees for the carrying on of the work of the Association will be appointed by the Executive from among the members (Professional or Honorary). The President and Secretaries being Members of all Committees.

Article X.- Exhibitions.

There will be each year Spring Exhibitions, Fall Exhibitions, and Ceramic Exhibitions.

The dates of holding the various Exhibitions of the Association and its Branches, during the year, will be arranged at the annual meeting by the Executive, or at a

special meeting called by the President.

The works exhibited must be original, and such as have not been previously exposed in public in Toronto.

The pictures shall be selected from those sent in, and hung by a committee composed of Professional Members of the Association.

No work shall be admitted to the Exhibition unless the Hanging Committee consider it to be a credit to the artist and to the Association.

No Member shall exhibit more than 20 pictures, not more than two portraits shall be exhibited by one Artist.

Works of non members (not more than ten) may be admitted on approval of the Hanging Committee.

A commission of 10% will be charged on the catalogue prices of all pictures sold out of the Exhibition, wether by the Association or otherwise. No work to be removed until the close of the Exhibition.

BRANCH ASSOCIATIONS.

The Charter of the Woman's Art Association of Canada empowers them to form Branch Associations, and provides that a general meeting which shall be the annual meeting of the Members of the Association shall be held every year in the city of Toronto, for the appointment of Officers and Directors, and the transaction of other business in connection with the Association.

Rules for the Government of Branches.

The Officers of Branch Associations must be Professional Members of the W.A.A. of Canada, paying an annual fee of \$1 each, and must conduct the Branch upon the same general lines.

The financial year of the Branch must correspond with that of the W.A.A., and copies of the annual reports of the Branches must be sent in before the annual meeting of the Association, when all such reports will be incorporated in the General Report.

The President of the W.A.A. shall be Hon. President of the Branches.

The names of Officers of the W.A.A. shall be printed on all publications of the Branches.

the Annual Meeting of the Branch should be held on the last Monday in September.

Article II.

A Branch ceases to exist when it has less than seven members including officers. The Secretary must then return the books to the Secretary of the Association, and the Treasurer remit to the Treasurer of the Association balance

of cash on hand, after payment of all liabilities, and any property either real or personal of which the Branch is possessed shall become the property of the Association. Such property shall be held in trust by the Association, and shall be returnable after deduction of any expense incurred in the disbanding of the Branch if re-organised within two years, after which it becomes the property of the W.A.A. of Canada.

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WAAC. Scrapbook 2, 1898-1902
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WAAC. Scrapbook 5, 1944-1947
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Mrs. R.T. Bogle, and Mrs. Munro, Toronto, May 5, 1986.

Fig. 1
Johann Zoffany
The Academicians of the Royal
Academy 1771-2
oil on canvas
coll: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Mrs. Dignam

MRS. DIGNAM.

Fig. 2
Mary Ella Dignam
photograph

Fig. 3
WAAC Sketch Club Life Class c. 1895
M.E. Dignam (far left), Fanny
Lindsay, Miss M. Lennox, Mrs.E.H.
Hemsted, Daisy Clark, Nan Gormley,
M. Cary McConnell, Grace Kerr and
Harriet Drummond

photograph
coll: WAAC

Fig. 4
Woman's Art Club
Spring Exhibition Catalogue 1891
Cover
coll: WAAC

Fig. 5
 Woman's Art Club
 Spring Exhibition Catalogue 1891
 H. G. Stennett, Pen and Ink Sketches
 M. E. Dignam, Beehives
 coll: WAAC

Oranges Florence P. Campbell

Head Daisy Clark

Fig. 6
 Woman's Art Club
 Spring Exhibition Catalogue 1891
 Florence P. Campbell, Oranges
 Daisy Clark, Head
 coll: WAAC

25. Chrysanthemums.
56. Study of a Negro Boy.
100. A Shady Corner.

55. Reflections.
50. Still Life.

8. Spinning Woman.
38. Figure Study.
63. Lunch Study.

IMPRESSIONS—WOMAN'S ART EXHIBIT.

Fig. 7

"Impressions - Woman's Art Exhibit"

Saturday Night March 6, 1897

- 25. Chrysanthemums
- 56. Study of a Negro Boy
- 100. A Shady Corner
- 55. Reflections
- 50. Still Life
- 8. Spinning Woman
- 38. Figure Study
- 63. Lunch Study

Fig. 8

Second Ceramic Exhibition 1894

Bijou teaset, Miss Hatch

Comet vase, Miss M. Louise

Punch bowl, Miss Hannaford

Bonboniere, Miss B. Williams

Heart bonboniere, Miss H. M. Proctor

Rose jar, Miss H. M. Proctor

Clock, Miss McClung

Teaset, Miss L. O. Adams

Vase, Miss Jane Bertram

photograph

coll: WAAC

Fig. 9
Second Ceramic Exhibition 1894
Teaset (right), Miss Roberts
Teaset (left), Miss Horoson
Tray, Miss Horoson
Bonboniere, Miss Horoson
photograph
coll:WAAC

Fig. 10
Alice Egan-Hagen
Self-Portrait Miniature 1901
china painting, 4.5 cm diameter
coll: Rachel Dickinson

Fig. 11
Alice Egan-Hagen
Game Plate: Scaup Duck 1896
Historical State Dinner Service
china painting, 22 cm diameter
coll: Haddo House, Aberdeenshire

Fig. 12
Historical State Dinner Service
coll: Haddo House, Aberdeenshire

Fig. 13
WAAC Handicraft Exhibition
c. 1900
photograph
coll: WAAC

Fig. 14
Doukhobor Embroideries
photograph
coll: WAAC

Fig. 15
Leaving demonstration at the WAAC
photograph
coll: WAAC

Fig. 16
Mary Ella Dignam
Woman Sewing
oil on canvas
coll: Elya Chestnut, Colborne

Fig. 17
Mary Ella Dignam
Hague Woods
oil on canvas
coll: Leigh Drushka, Toronto

Fig. 18
Mary Ella Dignam
Late Autumn
oil on canvas
coll: H. Russell Dignam, Grafton

Fig. 19
Joan Jamison
The Women's Art Association 1987
watercolour
coll: WAAC

Fig. 20
A.Y. Jackson
On the Hatch of the Beothic 1927
pencil
coll: Firestone Art Collection

Fig. 21
A.Y. Jackson
A Lake in Labrador 1930
oil on canvas
coll: Mr. R. Macg. Russell, Toronto

Fig. 22
Lawren Harris
North Shore, Baffin Island 1930
oil on canvas
coll: NGC

Fig. 23
Winnifred Kingsford
Seated Woman 1913
bronze
coll: NGC

Fig. 23a
Auguste Rodin
The Thinker 1880
bronze
coll: Rodin Museum, Philadelphia

Fig. 24
 Frances Loring
Fountain c. 1908
 plaster
 location unknown

Fig. 24a
 Auguste Rodin
Paolo and Francesca 1887
 plaster
 coll: Musée Rodin, Paris

Fig. 25
 Florence Wyle
Dancing Boy 1910
 bronze
 coll: NGC

Fig. 25a
 Auguste Rodin
Eternal Springtime 1884
 plaster
 coll: Rodin Museum, Philadelphia

Fig. 26
Katherine Wallis
Mercury Charmed by his own Invention
c.1904
bronze
coll: Central Museum, Peterborough

Fig. 26a
Auguste Rodin
The Siren c. 1900
stone
coll: Musée Rodin, Paris

Fig. 27
Frances Loring
Grief c. 1917
plaster
coll: AGO

Fig. 28
 Frances Loring
Torso
 wood
 coll: private
 photograph: NGC

Fig. 29
 Florence Wyle
Torso
 wood
 coll: private
 photograph: NGC

Fig. 30
Elizabeth Wyn Wood
Man and Woman 1926
marble
coll: AGO

Fig. 31
Elizabeth Wyn Wood
Gesture c. 1930
marble
coll: NGC

Fig. 32
Emily Coonan
Girl with Green Balloon c. 1920
oil on canvas
coll: NGC

Fig. 33
Lillias Torrance Newton
Self-Portrait 1920
oil on canvas
coll: NGC

Fig. 34
Mabel May
The Village c. 1924-5
oil on canvas
coll: NGC

Fig. 35
Sarah Robertson
Back River Vegetable Gardens
c. 1929
oil on canvas
coll: NGC

Fig. 36
Sarah Robertson
Coronation 1937
oil on canvas
coll: Art Gallery of Hamilton

Fig. 37
Prudence Heward
In a Café c. 1929
oil on canvas
coll: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Fig. 38
Emily Carr
Killer Whale Rug c. 1929
hooked rug
coll: NGC

Fig. 39
Emily Carr
Abstract Tree Forms c. 1931-2
oil on paper
coll: The Vancouver Art Gallery

Fig. 40
Emily Carr
Edge of the Forest c. 1935
oil on paper
coll: The McMichael Canadian
Collection, Kleinburg

Fig. 41
Paraskeva Clark
Presents from Madrid 1937
watercolour and graphite
coll: NGC

Fig. 42
Kathleen Munn
Untitled 1 c. 1926
oil on canvas
coll: Richards Family

Fig. 43
Kathleen Munn
Ascension. Passion Series c. 1934-5
oil on canvas
coll: Richards Family

Fig. 44
Edna Taçon
Blue Scherzo 1944
watercolour and ink on paper
coll: Prof. & Mrs. P. Taçon

Fig. 45
Garden Fete, 1918
Living Sculpture - dramatized
reproductions of famous pieces of
sculpture, arranged by the Sculpture
Club under President Mrs. McKay, and
convenor, Frances Loring.

Fig 46.
Garden Fete, 1926
Garden sculpture exhibition with
Frances Loring's Mermaid Fountain
(c. 1923) in centre and Florence
Wyle's Baby Fountain (c. 1923), at
upper right.

Fig. 47
Garden Fete - Shakespear Bazaar
1907
Mrs. W.H. Shapley, Miss A. Nairn,
Mrs. MacCallum, Miss Lindsay

Fig. 48
Garden Fete
Young Lady in Shakespearean Costume

Fig. 49
Garden Fete, June 1928
"The Curtain falls on an Afternoon
Performance"

Fig. 50
Garden Fete
"Coins of the Realm"

Fig. 51
Frances Loring
Portrait of Mary Dignam 1938
bronze relief
coll: WAAC

END

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