

Contemporary American Art at the National Gallery of
Canada (1967–79): The Surprising Legacy

of Brydon E. Smith

by

Ian C. Ferguson

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral
Affairs in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

In

Art History

Carleton University,
Ottawa, Ontario

©2014

Ian C. Ferguson

Abstract

This thesis draws upon Bruno Latour's concept of Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) to assess the active mediator role played by Brydon E. Smith, the National Gallery of Canada's (NGC) first Curator of Contemporary Art, as the NGC began to collect postwar American art. Considering the ensuing expansion of its collection from 1967 to 1979, I focus specifically on Smith's survey exhibitions of artists James Rosenquist (1968), Dan Flavin (1969), Donald Judd (1975) and their related acquisitions, as well as one by Jackson Pollock. Documentary sources in the NGC archives and a questionnaire and interviews with former colleagues of Smith have provided important insights into his curatorial choices and methodology. This research clarifies how curatorial agency may shape the aesthetics and coherence of a public collection. The NGC's newly acquired credibility in a broader North American cultural context is demonstrated through the critical reception of Smith's exhibitions, publications and acquisitions.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge in the first instance the sustained support from staff at the NGC Library and Archives and, in particular, Cyndie Campbell, Philip Dombowsky, and Peter Trépanier. NGC Chief Curator Paul Lang kindly authorized access to curatorial files. The following archivists and librarians responded quickly to specific enquiries: Danièle Archambault (Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal), Lisa Baldissera (Mendel Art Gallery), Rochelle Ball (Art Gallery of Alberta), Helen A. Harrison (Director, Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center), Marilyn Nazar (E.P. Taylor Library and Archives, AGO), Caitlin Murray (Judd Foundation), Cheryl Siegel (Vancouver Art Gallery), Josephine Sallis (Winnipeg Art Gallery), and Scott Turner (Carleton University). Brydon Smith and Ann Thomas generously suggested former contacts to be interviewed, reviewed lists of acquisitions and exhibitions, shared their library, and clarified biographical information. It has been an honour to have gotten to know them. I am also most grateful to the following former colleagues and acquaintances of Smith who answered my questionnaire and/or agreed to be interviewed: Monique Baker-Wishart, Marion Barclay, Tiffany Bell, David Bellman, Charles Hill, Phyllis Lambert, Andrew Lugg, David Monkhouse, Robert Murray, John O'Brian, Michael Pantazzi, Jeanne Parkin, David Peat, Carol Rapp, Dennis Reid, Kitty Scott, Gyde Shepherd, Michael Snow, Pierre Théberge, and Adam Welch. The latter also shared ideas and pointed me toward Bruno Latour. My greatest debt of gratitude goes to my supervisor Diana Nemiroff for her ongoing guidance and patience. Her unrivaled insights into Canadian and international art, NGC history, and curatorial practices have shaped this project and improved it in multiple ways.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Illustrations	v
Introduction	1
Chapter One – Early Years, Rosenquist, Pollock	13
Chapter Two – From Flavin to Judd	50
Conclusion	105
Bibliography	123
Illustrations	134
Appendix 1 - Major Acquisitions Attributed to Brydon E. Smith (1964–99)	149
Appendix 2 - Exhibitions Curated, Coordinated and Organized by Brydon E. Smith (1964–2009)	156

List of Illustrations in Text

Thomas Reid MacDonald, <i>Portrait of Brydon Smith</i> (1962)	13
James Rosenquist, <i>Painting for the American Negro</i> (1962–3)	34
Jackson Pollock, <i>No. 29, 1950</i>	45
Dan Flavin, <i>the nominal three (to William of Ockham)</i> (1963–4)	67
Donald Judd, <i>untitled</i> (1963, reconstructed 1975), or <i>DSS36</i>	94

List of Illustrations Following Text

Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah, <i>James Rosenquist, Front Street Studio with Paintings, March 30, 1963.</i>	134
Curator Brydon Smith in his NGC office at the Lorne Building with the United Press International photograph of Rosenquist painting a billboard above Times Square, c. 1957–59.	135
James Rosenquist, <i>Capillary Action II</i> (1963).	136
James Rosenquist's Broome Street studio, New York, 1963, showing sculptures from the same year.	137
Layout of the 1968 Rosenquist exhibition, Lorne Building.	138
James Rosenquist, Leo Castelli, and Brydon Smith in front of <i>Capillary Action II</i> at the 23 January 1968 opening of the NGC's Rosenquist exhibition.	138
The Hon. John Turner addresses guests at the opening of the James Rosenquist exhibition, 23 January 1968.	139
The opening of fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, 12 September 1969; left to right: Barnett Newman, Dan Flavin, Jean Boggs, and Brydon Smith.	140
Dan Flavin, <i>untitled (to Jane and Brydon Smith)</i> (1969) (detail).	141
Dan Flavin, <i>three sets of tangented arcs in daylight and cool white... (to Jennie and Ira Licht)</i> , (1969).	142

Dan Flavin, <i>monument 4 for those who have been killed in ambush (to P.K. who reminded me about death)</i> (1966).	143
Donald Judd, Jean Boggs, and Brydon Smith at the opening of the Judd retrospective on 23 May 1975.	144
The fourth-floor installation at the Lorne Building of the cadmium-red floor sculptures done for the 1975 Donald Judd retrospective.	145
For the 1975 Judd exhibition, Smith and the artist installed six square, open-ended plywood boxes facing an equal number of open parallelogram-based boxes with unequal angles (rhomboids) which had been purchased by the NGC in 1973.	146
Lorne Building floor plan, fourth floor, showing exhibition spaces and the central well area.	147
Brydon Smith, laureate (Outstanding Contribution) of the 2014 Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media.	148

Introduction

We can respect the decision of a public museum to assemble – slowly, patiently, painstakingly – a great collection, but we can never feel much affection for the process.

John Bentley Mays¹

The laborious process described above by Mays may not evoke affection but should, I believe, attract the interest of art historians. The period of the 1960s and 1970s represented an era of expansion of the National Gallery of Canada's (NGC) permanent collection in both geographic scope and historical range. In 1966, under the new Director Jean Sutherland Boggs (1966–76), the NGC began to collect contemporary American art, reversing a longstanding policy formalized in 1956.² The 1966 decision marked a turning point in the institution's history and signalled Canadian culture's increasing connectedness with wider North American developments. Beginning in 1967 and continuing through the 1970s, the NGC would build an impressive core collection of some of the most innovative, radical art being produced in the U.S.A. These acquisitions now form a collection which admirably reflects its time and has earned ongoing international interest.

While Jean Boggs's leadership enabled the expanded range of the NGC's collection, her vision was carried out by Brydon E. Smith, the NGC's first Curator of Contemporary Art (1967–79). In this research, I have explored Smith's contributions from a curatorial perspective and found evidence of his influential engagement with American art and artists. My research has confirmed that Smith's prescient curatorial choices decisively

¹ John Bentley Mays, "Master Plan," *Canadian Art* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 38, Brydon Smith, Press Clippings File, NGC Library and Archives.

² Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the NGC held 23–4 May, 1956, NGC Library and Archives. This decision will be examined in more detail the first chapter.

influenced the direction of the NGC's permanent collection and strengthened its holdings. My thesis may be viewed as a case study in curatorial agency and its impact on a permanent public collection.

My approach has been inspired by the concept of Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), developed by French researcher and writer Bruno Latour. His method examines the associations and connections between "actors," who may be people or things such as art objects or institutions.³ A network is defined by Latour as a "string of actions."⁴ Of course, art historians are accustomed to the study of art objects, exhibitions and collections viewed in the context of their creation, their innovations, and their impact within a broader visual culture. Our field of scholarship may prove a particularly rewarding ground for Latour's theory, which has questioned longstanding assumptions within sociology limiting social actors to human beings.

A public museum forms a social as well as a cultural institution, one which operates within a network involving its collection, visitors, staff, artists, collectors and patrons, critics, scholars, media, government, private galleries and other museums. Latour makes the distinction between actors who are *intermediaries*, conveying meaning without transforming it, and *mediators* who "transform, translate, distort, and modify" meaning in their activity.⁵ Smith should be viewed among the latter group of proactive, influential mediators, whose aesthetic viewpoint was informed by a wide net of contacts and who transformed the NGC's collection through his decisions. In the charged cultural context

³ Trained initially in philosophy and anthropology, Latour has written about issues relevant to a wide range of academic disciplines. He cites artworks and museum collections as examples of objects which can become actors in a social network. See Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 81, 97, 100, 102.

⁴ Latour, *ibid.*, 128.

⁵ Latour, *ibid.*, 39.

of the 1960s and 1970s, in which emerging new art forms put traditional art on the defensive, Smith created the conditions for this transformation by successfully cultivating relations of mutual respect with emerging American artists, critics, patrons, and gallery owners while engaging productively with NGC management, trustees and other members of the Canadian art world.

In looking at Smith's effectiveness and success as a curator, I will demonstrate that he played a pioneering role in exhibitions and especially acquisitions, and that his contribution merits study and recognition. Through his innovative curatorial practices, Smith built a collection which earned the NGC international credibility, offered Canadians a more comprehensive perspective on contemporary art, and helped promote significant American artists relatively early in their careers. Thanks in large part to his efforts, backed by Jean Boggs, the NGC for the first time in its history acquired and exhibited ground-breaking American art at the same time as major centres such as New York. The introduction of postwar American art to the NGC during this period, with Smith on the front lines, contributed to an evolving Canadian cultural discourse as it became more cosmopolitan and less centred on Europe.

After studying science and art history, Smith began his professional career at the Art Gallery of Toronto, renamed in 1966 the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), from 1964 to 1967, where he organized exhibitions and acquired examples of new American art. I will look briefly at this formative period which exercised a lasting influence on his curating and aesthetics. Smith's long career at the NGC can be divided into three stages with emphasis on different curatorial functions in each period. After serving as Curator of Contemporary Art (1967–79), he was appointed Assistant Director of the NGC and

Director of Research and Collections (1979–1993), a post equivalent to that of Chief Curator today. Following a sabbatical in 1993, he served as Curator of Modern Art (1994–99). My thesis focusses on the initial 1967–79 period, the most active and innovative of Smith’s career in terms of acquisitions and exhibitions. While I note bursts of curatorial inspiration in later years, the early time frame provides what Latour might describe as a “clamp” to help hold the moving landscape of Smith’s career briefly in place.⁶

During his initial years of great activity at the NGC, Smith organized surveys of American artists James Rosenquist (1968), Dan Flavin (1969), and Donald Judd (1975). In the context of these exhibitions and afterwards, he acquired representative groups of artworks by each artist. Works by these and related artists now form the core of the NGC’s permanent international collection for the 1960s and 1970s. While many examples would illustrate Smith’s bold acquisitions, I focus on Rosenquist’s *Painting for the American Negro* (1962–3), Flavin’s *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* (1963), and Judd’s *Untitled* (1963, reconstructed 1975) in light cadmium-red oil on wood with metal lathe. I also examine Pollock’s *Number 29, 1950*, a unique work in the artist’s oeuvre, which Smith acquired outside the context of a specific exhibition. After assessing the formal qualities of these acquisitions, I attempt to situate their importance within the NGC’s overall collection and within the oeuvre of each artist. Over the course of his career, Smith was responsible for acquisitions of approximately 82 American and 32 European works of art.⁷ The majority of these (67 American and 29 European) were

⁶ Latour, *ibid.*, 174.

⁷ See Appendix I.

acquired before 1980. Smith's eye for promising young artists and museum-worthy work was a salient feature of his curating.

I place Smith's achievements in the broader Canadian context by considering the background of the NGC's conservative collecting policy before Boggs's arrival, opposition in certain quarters to his aesthetic choices, the small ranks of an active museum or public constituency in Canada for contemporary American art,⁸ changes in NGC management, and nationalist tendencies within the Canadian arts community. Smith's empirical approach, influenced by his background in science, will be explored in conjunction with his intensely focussed engagement with art without *a priori* theoretical frameworks. Woven throughout the research are examples of how Smith's interest in science and his social conscience influenced his decisions.

Literature Review

Scholarly literature about the history of the NGC is less extensive than might be expected for Canada's premier art institution. In addition, a curatorial focus appears to be a largely overlooked research perspective. Dr. Jean Boggs's *The National Gallery of Canada* (1971) provides an official history of the collection up until 1971 and discusses the decision to begin collecting contemporary American art. Douglas Ord's book, *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas, Art, Architecture* (2003), is based on extensive archival research and reveals many interesting dimensions of the NGC's history. My goal has been to go into more detail about a selected period and section of the NGC's collection. The NGC's published policies and reports including the *Annual Review*

⁸ While the art of the 1960s and 1970s, including Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art and Minimalism, is now classified as "modern" for administrative purposes by the NGC, it would have been viewed as "contemporary" during the period under consideration. Even today most observers would consider such art "contemporary."

(1967–77), *Annual Bulletin* (1977–80) and the relevant sections of the National Museums Corporation *Annual Reports* (1968–1980) provide useful reviews of major institutional trends and developments, including important acquisitions.

Although Smith was not a prolific writer, his essays and the exhibition catalogues he edited, especially *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin* (1969) and *Donald Judd* (1975), are essential for evaluating his curatorial practices and legacy. A 2003 catalogue which recognizes Smith's exceptional curatorial contribution is Diana Nemiroff's *3 X 3: Flavin, Andre, Judd*, created for a travelling exhibition showcasing works from the NGC's permanent collection acquired by Smith. From Montreal, Chantal Pontbriand expressed admiration for Smith's contributions to the permanent collection in her editorial in *Parachute* 54 (1989) following the opening of the new NGC building.

While the abundant American literature related to Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art and Minimalism could not be researched exhaustively in a project of this scope, I have consulted authoritative voices from the time of Smith's exhibitions and acquisitions as well as important and recent monographs. James Meyer's *Minimalism* (2000) and *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (2001) provide helpful overviews as well as reprints of key theoretical texts. Annie Cohen-Solal's *Leo and His Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli* (2010) gives an excellent portrait of the New York art world during our period of focus.

Much of the literature on James Rosenquist has been published by commercial galleries and often lacks critical depth. Gene Swenson's essay "James Rosenquist: The Figure and Man-Maker," published in 1972, merits close reading, especially as it was originally written for the NGC exhibition catalogue. Walter Hopps and Sarah Bancroft's

catalogue *James Rosenquist: A Retrospective*, prepared for a 2003 Guggenheim exhibition, elucidates the artist's overall methods, values, and achievements. More recently, art historian Michael Lobel's *James Rosenquist: Pop Art, Politics, and History in the 1960s* (2009) provides a welcome scholarly examination of the artist and his times which comments on the NGC acquisitions. Finally, Rosenquist's interview with Jan van der Marck (*American Art*, 2004), and the artist's 2009 memoir *Painting Below Zero: Notes on a Life in Art* both refer to his collaboration with the NGC.

Michael Govan and Tiffany Bell's *Dan Flavin: A Retrospective*, published by the Dia Foundation for an exhibition in Washington in 2004, includes a catalogue raisonné. This publication contains a late essay by Smith as well as contributions from several Flavin experts who laud Smith's pioneering work on the 1969 Ottawa exhibition. Nicolas Serota's catalogue for the Tate Modern's 2004 retrospective *Donald Judd* contains authoritative essays, including one by Judd himself on colour. David Raskin's 2010 work *Donald Judd* is the first scholarly monograph on this artist. It attempts to disengage Judd from phenomenology and reconnect him to his essentially American intellectual tradition. Judd's *Complete Writings: 1959–75*, published at the time of the NGC exhibition by the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, provides an invaluable compilation of Judd's essays and articles.

Looking at Jackson Pollock and the NGC's acquisition, Smith's own late essay "Jackson Pollock (1912–1956): Abstracting over the Figure," *National Gallery of Canada Review* (2002), is helpful to understanding his affinities with this artist. Barbara Rose's *Pollock Painting* (1980) contains a rare and important 1950 interview with the artist and first-hand accounts by photographer/film-maker Hans Namuth, as well as

thoughtful essays by Rose herself, Rosalind Krauss and Francis O'Connor. The award-winning biography *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (1989), by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, narrates the filming around the creation of the NGC's work and its aftermath, situating the event as a turning point in the artist's career. Robert Storr's introductory essay in *Tony Smith: Architect, Painter, Sculptor* (1998) explains the connection between the NGC's work on glass and unrealized plans for a chapel by Pollock and his friend Tony Smith. MoMA's 1998 exhibition catalogue, *Jackson Pollock*, edited by Kirk Varnadoe, contains a useful essay by Pepe Karmel on Hans Namuth's photography and filming of Pollock. *Jackson Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works* by Francis O'Connor provides a helpful bibliography of the NGC's work up until 1979, which can be contrasted with the relative paucity of American writings about the work since it left the U.S.A.

As noted above, my critical approach will draw on Bruno Latour's *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (2005) which, I believe, proves more relevant to the NGC's situation than the idea of the museum as a "disciplinary" body, explored by Eileen Cooper-Greenhill in *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* and based on the theories of Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser. Latour's method has been applied in a British museum context in an interesting recent study by Andrew Dewdney, David Dibosa and Victoria Walsh titled *Post-Critical Museology: Theory and Practice in the Art Museum* (2013). Robert Storr's essay "Show and Tell" in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?* (2006), edited by Paula Marincola, provides an experienced curator's general standards for managing relations with artists. In an influential 1975 *Artforum* article, critic Lawrence Alloway criticized Smith and other curators of his generation for

allowing the artist to overwhelm the curatorial voice. I re-evaluate this judgement in light of Smith's career over a longer period, taking account of the exceptional demands made by artists like Flavin and Judd, who sought greater agency in writing about their art and how it was displayed.

Methodology

Smith's first years at the NGC, during which all his major exhibitions were produced, have been taken as illustrative of his curatorial philosophy and practices. I have examined the relevant portions of the Brydon Smith fonds and the NGC exhibition and curatorial files in order to analyze Smith's strategies and practices, and his associations with artists such as Rosenquist, Flavin, and Judd, as well as art critics, curators, and gallery representatives. The letters on file to Smith from Flavin around the time of the 1969 exhibition have yielded particular insights.

Responses to a questionnaire I sent to former colleagues of Smith have helped to document and round out my overall assessment. I have also interviewed former associates, when that was their preference. Smith and his wife Ann Thomas provided helpful biographical background and access to Smith's library to get an appreciation of his wide intellectual tastes in art, literature, science, and philosophy. In consideration of Smith's current state of health, he was not formally interviewed.

I have tracked the major acquisitions Smith recommended through the NGC's curatorial files and the Visiting Committee Minutes of Meetings (1968–80). *A Policy for a National Gallery* (1975) provided a useful historical portrait of the entire collection, along with valuable lists and statistics. It was commissioned by Jean Boggs for the benefit of NGC decision-makers and stakeholders, and to document her case for a new

building. For the purposes of illustrating Smith's curatorial connoisseurship, I focussed on works by Rosenquist, Flavin, Judd, and Pollock. As well, I have established a master list of Smith's major acquisitions and exhibitions to map his curating. These have been included as appendices.

Latour's theory proposes that actors be allowed to frame their own theories and contexts during the research before other explanations are applied. I have looked at Smith in this spirit. His professional itinerary, correspondence and writings did not reveal strong affinity to any particular critical theory associated with the art of his period, such as phenomenology. I have therefore explored and clarified why he avoided theorization and explained his stance within the particular curatorial priorities and practices of the period.

Chapter Breakdown

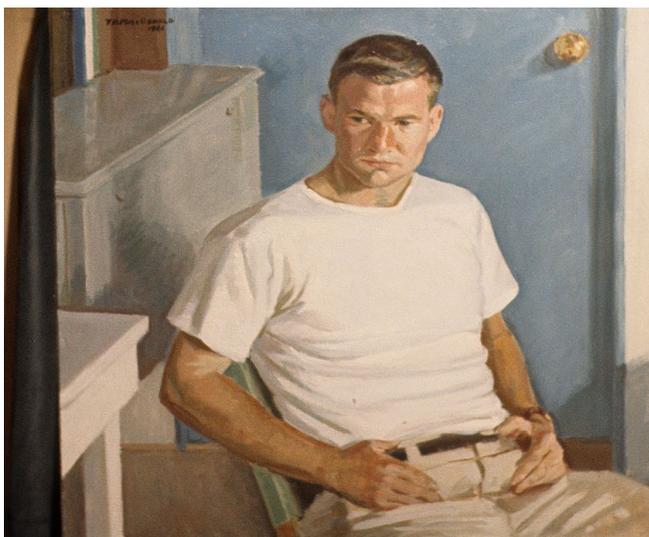
Chapter One – *Early Years, Rosenquist, Pollock*: This section sets out Smith's background and training prior to his recruitment by the NGC in 1967, a period when many of his curatorial interests and practices were formed. As Assistant Curator at the AGO, he organized the ground-breaking Dine, Oldenburg, Segal (1967) exhibition and became a highly visible figure on the Toronto cultural scene. His appointment to the NGC by his former AGT mentor Jean Boggs replicated the successful Toronto tandem and led to similar bold changes and initiatives. I examine in detail Smith's first solo NGC exhibition in 1968 featuring American artist James Rosenquist, the exhibition catalogue, and the related acquisition of the triptych *Painting for the American Negro* (1962–3). This chapter also covers the acquisition in 1968 of Jackson Pollock's singular work on glass, *Number 29, 1950*. Both works have been analysed in depth, situating them within the NGC's permanent collection and the careers of each artist.

Chapter Two – *From Flavin to Judd*: The focus here is on Smith’s curatorial practices and relations with these two artists, and the importance of the NGC exhibitions to their respective careers. I study two of Smith’s key acquisitions from this period: Flavin’s *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* (1963–4) and Judd’s *Untitled* (1963, reconstructed 1975) in light cadmium-red oil on wood with metal lathe. The latter is a representative “specific object” from the important sub-group of red boxes. The Flavin catalogue, whose creative graphics reflected Flavin’s aesthetics, demonstrated exemplary collaboration between artist and curator. Smith’s work in completing the monumental Judd catalogue raisonné in 1975 at the time of the NGC exhibition demonstrated impeccable scholarship, which continues to elicit favourable comment from American experts. The history of the cancelled Carl Andre exhibition in 1970 has been included to illustrate the intensity and range of Smith’s engagement with American sculpture in the 1970s, and the impact of the external political climate.

Conclusion – This section highlights salient elements of Smith’s curatorial philosophy and practices and points to the lasting legacy of his first years at the NGC. I show how his focussed approach to acquiring groups of works by a few artists and his preference for solo exhibitions functioned as complementary strategies. Smith’s exhibitions and acquisitions benefited from the consistent support of NGC Director Jean Boggs. With her backing he succeeded in exposing Canadians, including Canadian artists, to new visual vocabularies while acquiring masterpieces of the future when still affordable. In collecting rising American artists relatively early in their careers, he helped raise the NGC’s international profile and its credibility in Canada. His timely actions in the first phase of his career at the NGC to acquire masterworks by such artists as Pollock,

Rosenquist, Flavin, Andre and Judd have resulted in a superb collection of contemporary American art at the NGC, the strongest in Canada. The NGC's works continue to be cited by scholars and sought for international loans. While concentrating on Smith's early curatorial career, I also acknowledge his subsequent contributions including his involvement in plans for the new NGC building, and several significant late acquisitions, including Barnett Newman's *Voice of Fire* (1967) in 1989 and Mark Rothko's *No. 16* (1957) in 1993. These and related acquisitions demonstrate the coherence of his collecting strategy, sustained over a long career.

This concluding section also situates Smith's career in terms of the broader Canadian cultural discourse, including criticisms by those advocating for a broader vision. In spite of such forces, the positive critical reception accorded to Smith's early exhibitions and acquisitions, nationally and internationally, validated his strategy. His abiding commitment to new forms of art, respect for artists' views, and high ethical standards provide a model for future curators. I round out my discussion with appendices listing Smith's major acquisitions of American and European art along with his curated exhibitions over his entire career.

Chapter One – Early Years, Rosenquist, Pollock

Portrait of Brydon E. Smith (1962) by Thomas Reid MacDonald (1908-1978), dimensions and location unknown. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.

Brydon Smith joined the National Gallery of Canada (NGC) in 1967 as its first Curator of Contemporary and Modern Art. He brought with him valuable knowledge, contacts and practical experience from his work during 1964–67 as Assistant Curator and then as Curator of Modern Art at the Art Gallery of Toronto (AGT). At that time, the AGT depended upon donations from groups such as the Women’s Committee for acquisitions. Former members recalled for me their excitement over new proposals from the “amazing” young curator, who is still remembered fondly.⁹ The Committee included some of the most influential philanthropists and collectors in Toronto who would remain valuable contacts when Smith moved to the NGC.

⁹ Interview with Carol Rapp on 7 January 2014. Jeanne Parkin, email to the author 13 December 2013.

Brydon Evans Smith was born in Hamilton, Ontario on February 1, 1938 to a middle-class family.¹⁰ After earning a B.A. in Science Studies (biology and chemistry) at McMaster University in 1961, he completed a year of pre-medical courses at Queen's University. Smith's background in science, unusual among art historians and curators, revealed a curiosity about how things work and a respect for step-by-step analysis. These traits would later serve him well in engaging with artists and in understanding materials, lighting, colour, and conservation.

After a visit to the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, where he discovered the work of Paul Klee, Smith decided to switch to art history and moved to the University of Toronto, eventually completing his M.A. in 1965.¹¹ According to Dennis Reid, who studied in the same program shortly after Smith, the University emphasized hands-on observation and response to art objects.¹² Smith's essays showed his training in iconology, periodization, and connoisseurship. In an essay on aesthetics Smith revealed his preference for "grounding the object of critical evaluation in perceptions" in order "to escape subjectivism."¹³ His views reflected a wider cultural shift under way in favour of an objective aesthetic as seen in Pop Art and Minimalism. The sometimes cumbersome prose in Smith's essays suggests that writing about art required much effort. As a curator, he would prove a thoughtful but by no means prolific writer.

Smith's most influential professor appears to have been Robert Welsh, then a junior instructor and Ph.D. candidate from the United States, who would go on to a

¹⁰ His father worked as a clerk/bookkeeper at the Hamilton Bridge and Tank Company. Interview with Brydon Smith and Ann Thomas on 25 April 2014.

¹¹ Jean Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box JSB 6 personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹² Interview with Dennis Reid on 16 January 2014.

¹³ Brydon E. Smith, "The Aesthetic Work of Art," box 1, file 6 Philosophy – Aesthetics 4f2 (Professor Noxon), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

distinguished academic career. Smith would later assist him at the AGT on the Mondrian exhibition in 1966.¹⁴ Welsh no doubt encouraged Smith's interest in postwar American art. Smith wrote a notable essay on Jackson Pollock for Welsh's course which contains a discussion of *No. 29, 1950*, acquired by the NGC in 1968 on Smith's recommendation. In this essay, Smith argued that Pollock's painting on glass was more discordant and less rhythmical than others in the artist's oeuvre, always exposing its original undercoat on the reverse side of the glass.¹⁵ He concluded that "Pollock was a romantic painter who tended to push outward the frontier of experience toward the mystical, the unique, and the overwhelming; he accomplished this all within the intense privacy of his vision."¹⁶

While Smith was in graduate school, Welsh recommended him to AGT Chief Curator Jean Sutherland Boggs. Many years later, Boggs would remember that she tried "to hire him immediately because he had already revealed his enthusiasm with the most contemporary of art, an enthusiasm which many of the powerful women on the Gallery's Women's Committee shared and wanted to promote in the Gallery's collection and exhibitions."¹⁷ Smith declined immediate employment in order to finish his degree. In March 1964, however, when his studies were nearer completion, he began work as an Assistant Curator. Boggs left the AGT shortly after Smith's arrival, but they did work together on the first retrospective of Venetian artist Canaletto (19 October–17 November,

¹⁴ Welsh thanked Smith "for his unfailing and resourceful support in organizing the exhibition and preparing the catalogue," although Smith is not listed as a curator. See Robert P. Welsh, "Acknowledgements," *Piet Mondrian 1872–1944* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1966), n.p.

¹⁵ Brydon Smith, "Jackson Pollock (1912–1956)," box 1, file 7 Fine Arts (1963–65), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Jean Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box JSB 6 personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

1964), which enjoyed success in North America and Europe.¹⁸ In this project, Smith gained valuable experience with staging a major international exhibition and confirmed his ability to work as a strong team with Boggs.

Smith travelled regularly to New York during his AGT years, keeping in touch with the gallery scene there and visiting artists' studios. On one of these trips in the spring of 1966, he visited the now legendary Primary Structures exhibition at the Jewish Museum. There he experienced first-hand the work of Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, and Carl Andre, artists who would remain abiding curatorial interests throughout his career at the NGC.

Among Canadian museums at that time, the AGT appears to have been the most active in collecting postwar American art, although it was not alone.¹⁹ The AGT had acquired works by Ellsworth Kelly, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell and Kenneth Noland before Smith's time. In 1960, the AGT's Canadian Collection Committee changed its name to the Canadian-American Collection Committee to reflect its broader interests.²⁰

Smith brought a new vision to Toronto with the exhibition Les Levine Slipcover (1966). Levine was a ground-breaking, Irish-Canadian conceptual and media artist, then

¹⁸ AGO Director W.J. Withrow expressed his indebtedness to Boggs and several members of her staff, including Smith, for editorial work on the catalogue. See W.G. Constable, *Canaletto* (Toronto: s.n., 1964), 6.

¹⁹ In 1960 the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) acquired *Mobile Rouge* (1956) and *Quatre disques noirs et six rouges* (1957) by Alexander Calder. In 1961, it purchased *Arbres sur fond de mer* (1959) by Milton Avery and accepted a donation of Sam Francis's *Abstraction* (1954). Email to author of 1 October 2013 from Danièle Archambault, Registrar and Head of Archives, MMFA. The Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) does not appear to have collected contemporary American art actively prior to 1967. Email to the author of 26 September 2013 from Cheryl Segal, Librarian/Archivist, VAG.

²⁰ Email to the author of 16 September 2013 from Marilyn Nazar, AGO Archivist, E.P. Taylor Library & Archives. For a more complete overview, see: Roald Nasgaard, *1945–1980: Volunteer Committee Acquisitions* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1980).

based in New York. Slipcover, an early environmental and site-specific installation, completely filled the AGO's octagonal gallery. It involved eight highly polished, expanding and deflating vinyl bags, as well as projected images of the paintings and architecture in the room prior to the installation.²¹

While the AGT collected postwar American art prior to Smith's arrival, he led the way in acquiring and exhibiting what is today known as Pop Art. His major project was Dine, Oldenburg, Segal (DOS), held 14 January to 12 February 1967 at the renamed Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO). DOS was mounted jointly with the Albright-Knox Museum in Buffalo where it travelled after Toronto.²² Smith may have seen this particular grouping of artists in New York at the Sydney Janis Gallery, which had exhibited them in January 1964 along with James Rosenquist in a show titled Four Environments by Four New Realists. In an unpublished period interview with Professor William Lipke of Cornell University, Smith claimed that the particular grouping grew naturally out of his earlier work without a pre-conceived theory.²³ He preferred more open-ended, collaborative style of curating even at this relatively early stage of his career. He also engaged the three artists on the design of title pages for the catalogue, and involved them in the choice of works. This collaborative approach would remain Smith's *modus operandi* at the NGC.

The AGO played a cutting-edge role with this exhibition, the first focussed on Pop Art and organized by a Canadian museum. Segal would not get a solo exhibition in an American museum until later that year. Oldenburg had not yet sold any large-scale works

²¹ Brydon Smith, "An Interview with Les Levine," *Slipcover: a place by Les Levine* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1966), 2–3.

²² Each museum shared the estimated \$20,000 overall cost. The Canada Council helped the AGO with a grant of \$6,600. See: "DOS Budget," box 5, file 2 Dine, Oldenburg and Segal (1961, 1966–7), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²³ William Lipke, "Brydon Smith and the Avant-Garde," undated interview transcript, c. early 1967, *ibid.*

to a museum. Smith's timing proved excellent as all three artists soon generated museum interest in the United States. Smith also initiated a practice he would follow at the NGC by exhibiting groups of works by the same artist, in effect three small surveys. Professor Lipke concluded that by showing a range of each artist's work and pointing out differences, Smith "... really settled a lot of questions that have been raised concerning pop art."²⁴

Before the exhibition closed, the AGO announced the acquisition of Oldenburg's *Giant Hamburger* from donated funds.²⁵ Oldenburg was quoted in the media: "I am very happy about it... It's the first one of those really big pieces to go into a museum."²⁶ The reported \$2,000 purchase price fuelled the ire of opponents of this new form of contemporary art. In a thoughtful letter to the *Globe and Mail*, which he signed as Curator of Modern Art, Smith defended the purchase in the following terms:

I want to point out that the confronting of an unsettling work of contemporary art, like the Hamburger, can also be very beneficial for the viewer, given the right conditions. First the viewer must like art. Secondly he must be secure enough to enjoy being alive in the 1960s, in spite of the frightening violence and rapid change of these times. Thirdly, he must spend some time with the work, looking at it and thinking about it. Then he may discover valuable insights about art, life, and himself.²⁷

These words nicely summarize Smith's faith in contemporary art, a form he would promote and defend throughout his career, even when a lonely voice. In the same letter Smith predicted that in fifty years the piece would be shown as a unique 20th century work.²⁸

²⁴ Lipke, "Brydon Smith and the Avant-Garde," *ibid.*

²⁵ AGO press release of 4 February 1967, box 5, file 2 Dine, Oldenburg and Segal (1961, 1966–7), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives..

²⁶ Robert Fulford, *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 February 1967, *ibid.*

²⁷ Brydon Smith, Letter to the Editor, *The Globe and Mail*, 7 February 1967, *ibid.*

²⁸ In fact, by the end of 1968, the work was requested on loan by MoMA, the Tate and major European museums. Now titled *Floor Burger*, it was recently restored and loaned

Smith's years at the AGO left an important legacy which has yet to be researched in depth. His major AGO acquisitions are set out in Appendix I. He also experienced a disappointment when his recommendation to purchase a Mondrian work for \$80,000 was turned down over cost concerns.²⁹ Smith considered the work a bargain and the rejection became a factor in his decision to move to the NGC.³⁰

Smith's Toronto reputation contributed to the media attention across Canada when his move to the NGC was announced in the spring of 1967. The *Vancouver Province* published a thoughtful piece foreseeing that the NGC would soon hold shows by the American vanguard.³¹ Robert Fulford in the *Toronto Daily Star* termed Smith's departure "the saddest news on the art scene in a long time," noting that in a brief period Smith had succeeded in changing "both the attitudes and the image of the gallery."³²

In moving to the NGC, Smith made a timely career move. He was rejoining Jean Boggs, who had been appointed NGC Director in 1966. Hired as a Research Curator effective 17 April 1967, he was quickly made Curator of Modern Art, following a competition.³³ The opportunity to work at a national institution at a higher salary offset the distance from the vibrant Toronto art scene.

Smith's appointment followed a significant policy shift at the NGC which, in contrast to the major museums in Montreal and Toronto, had hitherto not collected contemporary

by the AGO to MoMA as a key work in the Oldenburg retrospective held 14 April–5 August 2013.

²⁹ Douglas Ord, *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas, Art, Architecture* (Montreal: McGill and Queen's University Press, 2003), 198.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "The Man Behind the Hamburger Deal is Moving Up," *Vancouver Province*, 7 April 1967, Brydon Smith, Press Clippings File, NGC Library and Archives.

³² Robert Fulford, "Personal Anger and Some Sad News," *Toronto Daily Star*, 11 February 1967, *ibid.*

³³ Minutes of the 108th Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the NGC held 27–28 September 1967, NGC Library and Archives.

American art. This longstanding practice had been formalized by the NGC Board of Trustees on 23–4 May 1956, as follows:

The question of a collection of contemporary United States painting was discussed...and it was agreed that while the collection was desirable, it was not recommended unless we could have a large and representative collection. It was pointed out that the large American museums have good collections of United States painting as this was their own particular field. It was also noted that there were few Canadian paintings in the United States galleries and museums.³⁴

As a consequence, the NGC did not acquire works from the dynamic American art scene for another decade. Smith's own collecting would take a new approach. Rather than attempt to build the "large and representative" collection which had seemed desirable (but unattainable) to the trustees in 1956, Smith chose to invest the NGC's limited resources in a select group of artists. Over time, his approach resulted in a focussed collection featuring clusters of rare master works by leading American artists.

Dr. Boggs described opening the collection to new American art as "perhaps the most radical change in acquisition policy" introduced following her arrival.³⁵ (With the backing of trustees, she had also engineered the expansion of the collection into photography as well as extending its historical scope.) Having spent so many years in the United States, she was sensitive to charges she might be "Americanizing the collection," but explained that "my compulsion was to enliven it with some of the energy that has been associated with the United States..."³⁶ In a private letter many years later, she would indicate that she had no difficulty persuading the trustees to accept her

³⁴ Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the NGC held 23–4 May 1956, NGC Library and Archives. For the consequences of this decision and NGC Director Alan Jarvis's preference for European art, see Ord, *The National Gallery*, 148–55.

³⁵ Jean Sutherland Boggs, *The National Gallery of Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971), 61.

³⁶ Boggs, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 62.

recommendation.³⁷ In fact, the ground had been prepared by an earlier and favourable report of the Chief Curator to the Trustees, with the formal decision deferred until after Boggs's appointment.³⁸ This shift acknowledged, albeit somewhat late in the day, the growing postwar importance of the New York art world. The NGC decision signalled Canada's gradual move away from a British-centred world outlook toward a more North-American cultural orientation. Boggs and Smith operated on the cusp of this change.

As part of his NGC contract, Smith had negotiated a discretionary fund of \$2,500 to be used for acquisitions under his own authority. (These budgets were given to other full curators as well, but were clawed back within a few years as the Director was unhappy with some of the acquisitions.) Smith used his first allocation to purchase eight of Andy Warhol's *Brillo Boxes* (1964), a work which the previous NGC Director Charles Comfort had refused to certify as "sculpture," which would have allowed the Jerrold Morris Gallery of Toronto to import them for sale at a low tariff under then Canadian regulations.³⁹ With this acquisition, Pop Art had arrived at the National Gallery. Acquired from the Castelli Gallery in New York, *Brillo Boxes* is now a centrepiece of the NGC's American collection.

³⁷ Jean Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box JSB 6 personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³⁸ Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the NGC held 12–13 May 1965, NGC Library and Archives.

³⁹ Ord, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 198. After 1968, the Board of Trustees of the National Museums Corporation delegated authority for any work under \$15,000 to the NGC Director. Works between \$15,000 and \$100,000 had to be approved by the NGC's Visiting Committee. Curatorial Committees reviewed any recommendations to the Director. The Visiting Committee also reviewed lists of acquisitions made on the Director's authority and, through its Chairman, who had to be a member of the National Museums Board, any purchase over \$100,000. See: Minutes of the Visiting Committee held 27 September 1974 (Appendix F), NGC Library and Archives.

Shortly after his appointment, Smith undertook a cross-Canada lecture tour. While in Vancouver, Smith was quoted in the *Province* about artistic trends away from painting and toward multi-media installations. He may have got a bit beyond his brief when he affirmed: “The whole museum concept is one which we have to get rid of – at least the concept of buying and exhibiting paintings only.”⁴⁰ At that time, artists were fascinated by new media. Concepts such as André Malraux’s “le musée sans murs” were influential. Smith had already acknowledged these currents with his *Les Levine* installation.

Later in 1967, Smith helped Dennis Reid, the junior curator for Canadian art, conduct an interview for a monograph on Canadian artist Graham Coughtry. At the editing stage, Reid asked Coughtry if a passage relating to Smith’s smoking marijuana might be deleted.⁴¹ The sensitive part of the interview reads: “Well, I find that when I get high, on pot, say, that I tend to isolate things, and become very aware of single things in a situation. Could be a sound. Could be an object ...”⁴² I mention this incident not simply to show that Smith was part of the *zeitgeist* of the 1960s, but because it provides a glimpse of his practice of intense focus on an art object. This approach would give Smith insights into the challenging works by artists such as Flavin, Andre and Judd.

Smith began preparing his first exhibition for the NGC on James Rosenquist before his arrival in Ottawa. In a 2002 interview, Smith dated his initial encounters with

⁴⁰ *Vancouver Province*, 7 April 1967, Brydon Smith Press Clippings File, NGC Library and Archives.

⁴¹ Dennis Reid to Graham Coughtry, 27 October 1967, box 4, file 5 Graham Coughtry (1966–67), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁴² *Ibid.* Reid and Smith’s concerns were by no means exaggerated. At that time, simple possession of soft drugs could lead to criminal charges, possible loss of the security clearance required for Public Service employment, or refusal for permission to travel behind the Iron Curtain.

Rosenquist's work to an exhibition on polychrome sculpture at the Isaacs Gallery in Toronto in 1965 as well as periodic curatorial trips to New York.⁴³ Rosenquist has recalled having doubts about whether a sufficient body of work could be assembled for his first retrospective and credited Smith with convincing him to go ahead.⁴⁴ In a letter to Smith about his possible recruitment, NGC Director Jean Boggs held out the possibility of doing a major exhibition every two years and a small one annually "like the Rosenquist you are planning."⁴⁵ This confirms that the Rosenquist exhibition was initially slated for the AGO. Both Smith's and Boggs's strong professional ethics would, however, have precluded the NGC taking over this project without the AGO's consent.⁴⁶

In January 1967 the NGC signed an agreement with Rosenquist for the artist's assistance in designing the poster, catalogue, and hanging the exhibition planned for the following year from 24 January to 25 February 1968. Consistent with Smith's earlier curatorial practices, this type of contract may be counted among the policy innovations introduced by Jean Boggs.

Smith also recommended purchases in conjunction with the Rosenquist exhibition while still at the AGO. In February 1967, Smith wrote to Boggs recommending purchase of *Painting for the American Negro* (1962–3), which he believed was still in the artist's

⁴³ "Interview with Brydon Smith by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002," box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith interviewed by Kitty Scott (2001–2), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁴⁴ Jan van der Marck, "Reminiscing on the Gulf of Mexico: A Conversation with James Rosenquist," *American Art*, 20, no. 3 (2006): 99.

⁴⁵ Jean Boggs to Brydon Smith, 28 December 1967, box 16, file 1 Personal – Move to Ottawa and the NGC (1966–68), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁴⁶ Email to the author from Ann Thomas, 4 November 2013.

collection.⁴⁷ He added that he had recently met Rosenquist in Toronto to discuss the exhibition, had many ideas, and considered that twenty to thirty paintings would suffice for a comprehensive and impressive show.⁴⁸ Smith appears to have been energized after conversations with the artist.

Rosenquist, born in North Dakota in 1933, was a serious, rising artist with some international museum exposure, but one whose future in the canon was still uncertain. His only one-man show at a museum had been the touring exhibition of his monumental, multi-panelled painting *F-III*. Dedicating a solo show to a relatively young artist was an example of the adventurous approach embraced by Smith and Boggs, and of Boggs's confidence in her new curator.

Soon after arriving in Ottawa in April 1967, Smith began contacting museums and collectors for loans. Among those he approached was the influential Paris gallery owner Ileana Sonnabend. She had championed Rosenquist early in his career and convinced her former husband, Leo Castelli, to take him on at his New York gallery. In late May 1967, Smith wrote to thank her for her suggestions about the exhibition and for introducing him to Count Giuseppe Panza di Biumo.⁴⁹ Smith eventually secured thirty-two works from thirteen private collections, six museums, and three private galleries.⁵⁰ Mr. and Mrs.

⁴⁷ Brydon Smith to Jean Boggs, 22 February 1967, James Rosenquist Exhibition, file 12-4-359, volume 1, NGC Library and Archives. The painting was sold to the NGC through the Castelli Gallery.

⁴⁸ Ibid. The artist had travelled to Toronto to install *Stellar Structure*, a hanging in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Davidson. This work was later loaned to the NGC exhibition. Like Smith, the Davidsons focussed on a few contemporary American artists and aimed for groups of works. See: Roald Nasgaard, *Selections from the Roger and Myra Davison Collection of International Contemporary Art* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1986).

⁴⁹ Brydon Smith to Ileana Sonnabend, 29 May 1967, file 12-4-359, volume 1, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

⁵⁰ Brydon Smith, ed., *James Rosenquist* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968), 11.

Robert Scull of New York loaned seven works and Panza di Biumo of Milan five, helping to create a critical mass. The latter collector in particular enabled Smith to secure scarce, early works.

The works in the NGC exhibition dated from 1960 to 1966. Although covering a limited time period, the show was mounted as a mid-career retrospective. In his “Foreword” to the exhibition catalogue, Smith noted that several of the large works from 1962–63 had never been shown as a group since Rosenquist did not have a solo gallery exhibition that season.⁵¹ Others had been purchased directly from the studio with no public showing.

Smith quickly signed up American critic and curator Gene Swenson to write the principal catalogue essay. Among the first to recognize Rosenquist’s originality and the importance of Pop Art generally, Swenson also counted as a friend of the artist. Rosenquist went so far in his recent (2009) memoir to describe him as “my aesthetic collaborator.”⁵² Swenson wrote a brilliantly lyrical, if overlong and at times rambling essay. In spite of its length and digressions, Smith conveyed his satisfaction with the introductory draft to Rosenquist in August 1967.⁵³ In the last stages of editing, however, Boggs insisted that Swenson agree to further deletions.⁵⁴ Her main concern appeared to be that about ten per cent of the long essay was devoted to artists not in the exhibition, principally Pollock and Rauschenberg. When a furious Swenson refused, the essay was

⁵¹ Ibid., 11.

⁵² James Rosenquist with David Dalton, *Painting Below Zero: Notes on a Life in Art* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 116.

⁵³ Brydon Smith to James Rosenquist, 14 August 1967, file 12–4–359, volume 2, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

⁵⁴ Jean Boggs to Gene Swenson, 31 October 1967, file 12–4–359, volume 2, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives. She wired to Swenson that “certain conventions be observed and that our public (the Canadian taxpayers essentially) must be served.” She did agree to pay Swenson the agreed fee.

dropped from the catalogue. In its place, the NGC reprinted a one-page commentary by Ivan Karp, Leo Castelli's assistant.⁵⁵ Drafted for another event and replete with art-market jargon, this piece offered little by way of insight or scholarship.

The withdrawal of Swenson's essay constituted a major disappointment for Smith who had been caught in the negotiations between Swenson and the NGC Director. Swenson's writing would certainly have enlivened the catalogue and increased its chances of attracting American commentary. Its inclusion might have earned the catalogue later scholarly interest as one of Swenson's last major pieces of art criticism. By 1968, Swenson had become immersed in protest politics, burning his bridges with several American museums in addition to the NGC, and had begun his descent into mental illness.⁵⁶ He died in 1969 in car accident in his native Kansas. The University of Kansas published the withdrawn NGC essay posthumously in his honour, thus confirming its scholarly value.⁵⁷

The NGC announced the upcoming exhibition in a press release dated 5 January 1968. The text merits a close reading, as the NGC was clearly moving into new exhibition territory. Perhaps anticipating criticism, the NGC downplayed the fact that this would be its first curated solo exhibition of a contemporary American artist. Instead, it stressed continuity, noting that Rosenquist had already been shown at the NGC as part of the touring Americans 1963 exhibition, and that interest in his work had grown over the 1960s. Smith himself was quoted in carefully chosen words:

⁵⁵ Ivan C. Karp, *American Masters: Art Students League*, (New York, 1967). Reproduced in Smith, *Rosenquist*, 13.

⁵⁶ Scott Rothkopf, "Banned and Determined," <http://www.mutualart.com/OpenArticle/Banned-and-determined/A6175D5AF77A623E>, accessed 3 October 2013.

⁵⁷ Gene Swenson, "James Rosenquist: The Figure and Man-Maker," *The Register of the Museum of Art, University of Kansas* IV, nos. 6-7 (24 October–5 December 1971): 53-81.

The important thing to remember... is that contemporary art should tell us something about our environment and ourselves. Most of us are living consciously or unconsciously in the distant past, or dreaming about the future. Very few people enjoy their present environment. One aim of the contemporary artist is to make us aware of the richness and variety of our immediate surroundings. I am organizing this exhibition because I believe that Jim Rosenquist has succeeded in doing this visually through his paintings.⁵⁸

Smith's above *apologia* for contemporary art echoed his earlier cited letter to the *Globe and Mail* defending the AGO's acquisition of *Giant Hamburger*.

To create a sense of occasion for the 23 January 1968 opening of the exhibition and ensure official buy-in, Boggs invited Prime Minister Trudeau. When he proved unavailable, she settled for an up-and-coming young politician, the Honourable John Turner, Registrar General. In his remarks at the *vernissage*, Turner noted that the exhibition provided background for a better understanding of the NGC's recent acquisitions, Rosenquist's *Painting for the American Negro* and *Capillary Action II*, as well as showcasing "Rosenquist's personal contribution to contemporary American art."⁵⁹

Of particular interest are Turner's closing remarks. Perhaps adding his own political and personal views, Turner framed the NGC's decision in April 1967 to begin acquiring American art in the following terms:

This combination of the modernism, the Americanism and the individualism in these works by James Rosenquist reminded me of a function of art and a function of the National Gallery. Both are to challenge – to heighten our visual awareness in that challenge, but even more to challenge us to think, to speculate, and to philosophize through our eyes. In this time when we have thought and talked so much about Canadian identity, it is refreshing to confront this problem in a different form for we can examine in this exhibition what we share with our closest neighbours, some of

⁵⁸ NGC Press Release, 5 January 1968, box 8, file 2 James Rosenquist – Exhibition research material, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁵⁹ Smith, *Rosenquist*, 11.

their virtues, as well as some of their weaknesses. We may even find an answer to the Canadian identity by discovering what makes us distinct.⁶⁰

Coming after the Centennial year celebrations, Turner's words reveal new confidence about negotiating Canada's identity through engagement with contemporary international art. His remarks outlined an ambitious, quasi-nation-building role for the NGC, reflecting Jean Boggs's modernist ideals and belief in the power of art. Under her leadership, with Smith as her Curator of Contemporary Art, the NGC would soon acquire and exhibit art which would prove increasingly challenging.

The well-attended exhibition opening – New York gallery owners Leo Castelli and Richard Bellamy (Green Gallery) were guests – and press conference received positive, nation-wide coverage. Gail Dexter praised Smith's curatorial work in the *Toronto Star*, noting how Pop Art had evolved from “an exuberant exploration of North American life style” into “a tortured social critique.”⁶¹ Other newspapers and art publications welcomed the policy change in collecting at the NGC while praising Smith's work and choice of acquisitions.⁶² Overall, the positive coverage suggests that the NGC was broadly abreast of Canada's cultural elites rather than much ahead. Interested Canadians seem to have

⁶⁰ Hon. John Turner, Registrar General of Canada, “Speech for the Opening of the James Rosenquist Exhibition, 23 January 1968,” box 8, file 2 James Rosenquist – Exhibition research material, NGC Library and Archives.

⁶¹ Gail Dexter, “Rosenquist: Pop and Papa,” *Toronto Star*, 27 January 1968, box 8, file 1 James Rosenquist – Exhibition research material, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁶² See for example:

Jeremy Adamson, *Artscanada* XXV, no. 1 (April 1968): 45;

Robert Ayre, “Pictures from Life,” *Montreal Star*, 3 February 1968;

Irene Haywood, “A Trip to Ottawa: James Rosenquist and His POWER,” *The Gazette*, 24 February, 1968;

Kay Kritzwiser, “Ottawa Shows Pop Rosenquist,” *The Globe and Mail*, 24 January 1968. These and related articles can be found in the clippings file, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

been ready to embrace Pop Art by the late 1960s after nearly a decade of media and market-driven exposure, travelling exhibitions, and shows in private Toronto galleries.

Beyond his help with the exhibition *per se*, Rosenquist's contributions to its promotion merit attention. The artist's catalogue cover and poster showed a close-up of brightly coloured, canned spaghetti in their lower and middle sections. Rosenquist had used this signature motif effectively in *F-111* (1965) and *I Love You in my Ford* (1961), a work then at Sweden's Moderna Museet and not available for the Ottawa show. The same motif in black and white filled the top third of the cover and poster. A red stem rose overlaid the two spaghetti images. The concept may be read as a tongue-in-cheek valentine from the artist to Canadians for supporting his work. Signed copies of the poster have become collectors' items on the secondary market. In addition to the cover design, Rosenquist contributed five brief "descriptions of experiences" to the catalogue suggesting how the artist as an urban *flâneur* gathered impressions before assembling and painting the fragmentary images.⁶³ With an economy of means, these short texts demonstrated Rosenquist's creative process involving unusual juxtapositions and sparking reflections in viewers.

A collaborative venture between artist and curator, the catalogue featured several layout innovations. One image of a comb, cut diagonally on three sides, created an attached cut-out. A black and white reproduction of *F-111* could be opened like a diorama with a 4-page foldout. Highlighting the relevance of commercial art to Pop Art, Smith inserted a 1960 UPI news clipping and photograph of Rosenquist painting a billboard above Times Square. The overall look of the catalogue was decidedly "funky" by traditional NGC standards. All the works in the exhibition were illustrated, most in

⁶³ Smith, *Rosenquist*, 88.

black and white. The catalogue's small format (18 x 20.5 cm.) offered a pocket-size reframing of Rosenquist's early production. It presented itself as a commercial product appropriate for a Pop artist.

Although modestly sized and short on text without Swenson's essay, the Rosenquist catalogue nonetheless generated international interest. British critic Lawrence Alloway (who coined the term "pop") wrote Jean Boggs for a copy. He had been unable to secure one in New York and considered it essential for his book on Pop Art.⁶⁴ Museums in Buffalo and Philadelphia wrote to congratulate the NGC and request copies.⁶⁵ The Whitney Museum illustrated the NGC cover in its 1972 exhibition catalogue on Rosenquist along with photographs of Boggs, Smith and the two NGC acquisitions.⁶⁶

The American media also showed interest. The week of the NGC opening, *Time* magazine featured an illustrated article on Rosenquist and Roy Lichtenstein, consecrating the former as "the Rubens of the billboards," but, more importantly from the perspective of this study, citing Rosenquist's NGC exhibition as a sign of his growing exposure.⁶⁷ At that period, *Time* was the most widely read weekly news magazine in the world, influential in culture and politics. The NGC had thus been picked up by the American mainstream media and placed on the cultural map, a hitherto highly unusual, if not unprecedented, development.

⁶⁴ L. Alloway to Jean Boggs, 14 April 1969, file 12-4-359, volume 3, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives. Distribution of catalogues was not systematic at that period, underlining the importance of professional networks.

⁶⁵ Dorothy Mayhall, Aldrich Museum, to Brydon Smith, 15 February 1968 and Stephen Prokopoff, University of Pennsylvania Institute of Contemporary Art, to Jean Boggs, 4 February 1968, file 12-4-359, volume 3, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

⁶⁶ Marcia Tucker, *James Rosenquist* (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1972), 49, 77, 94, 134.

⁶⁷ "Painting: Rosenquist and Lichtenstein Are Alive," *Time*, (26 January 1968): 64-5 in clippings file, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

Equally timely for the NGC, the Metropolitan Museum opened its display of *F-III* along with works by Nicolas Poussin, Jacques-Louis David, and Emanuel Leutze on 16 February 1968 under the title *History Paintings – Various Aspects*. Highly controversial at the time, that decision is now viewed as a tipping point in Pop Art’s acceptance by traditional art institutions. Although coincidental, this move by a major New York museum underlined the pertinence of the NGC’s choice of artist.

Indications of the NGC’s satisfaction with the critical and public reception can be found in a graciously worded letter to Rosenquist from Boggs which noted “the great fun having you in Ottawa,” thanked him for his design contributions, and added that she had heard his name frequently as she walked the streets of Ottawa.⁶⁸ In another positive sign, the exhibition was extended for a week to respond to public interest. Finally, the NGC’s *Annual Report* for 1967–68 included two full pages of photographs of the opening (Rosenquist with Turner, and Rosenquist with Castelli and Smith) as well as a photograph of *Capillary Action II* on the frontispiece, notwithstanding the competition for coverage that year from the NGC’s multiple Centennial year activities.⁶⁹

As noted above, the NGC purchased two works at the time of the exhibition. A sculpture, *Capillary Action II*, was acquired from Mrs. Sonnabend’s Paris gallery for U.S. \$ 6,500 (\$6,956 Canadian), and *Painting for the American Negro* from Castelli for \$12,000 (\$12,840 Canadian).⁷⁰ Both purchases were announced on 25 January 1968, as the Ottawa show opened. Working with the artist, his collectors, and his dealers provided

⁶⁸ Jean Boggs to James Rosenquist, 7 February 1968 (sent 18 April 1968), file 12–4–359, volume 3, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

⁶⁹ National Gallery of Canada, *Annual Report of the Board of Trustees 1967–68* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer for the National Gallery of Canada), 38, 39.

⁷⁰ Curatorial files for *Capillary Action II* and *Painting for the American Negro*, National Gallery of Canada.

Smith an unequalled opportunity to survey Rosenquist's early production and to acquire two of the more interesting pieces. Both works have become important, rare examples of the artist's early production. Perhaps the only other painting in the Ottawa exhibition comparable in terms of its subsequent prominence would be MoMA's *Lanai*, a work on a slightly smaller scale than *Painting for the American Negro*.

Several factors led Smith to recommend *Painting for the American Negro* for the NGC's collection. The work already had an exhibition history in public museums in Brussels, Buenos Aires, Minneapolis, and Illinois.⁷¹ It had been published in *Artforum* and *Art in America*, and in John Rublowsky's book *Pop Art*.⁷² The large scale of the work, a triptych, as well as its completion over a two-year period pointed to its importance. Perhaps most tellingly, the theme appealed to the socially conscious Smith. The painting very much reflects the political and social landscape of its period, exactly what Smith believed contemporary art should confront.

In his rejected NGC catalogue essay, Gene Swenson recalled encountering Rosenquist in front of *Guernica*, then at the MoMA. The artist said he was working on a large work, then titled *Homage to the American Negro*, and had come to see how Picasso had composed his great statement about violence, war and suffering.⁷³ Swenson wrote that Rosenquist was not attempting to "equal the greatest moral painting of our century," but that in a different context his ambitious, politically charged work was "closely reasoned,

⁷¹ Kay Bearman of Castelli Gallery to Brydon Smith, 20 September 1967, file 12-4-360, volume 2, James Rosenquist Exhibition, NGC Library and Archives.

⁷² For a bibliography dated 29 September 1970 with seven citations see "James Rosenquist Painting for the American Negro," box 8, file 1 James Rosenquist – Exhibition research material, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁷³ Swenson, "James Rosenquist: The Figure and Man-Maker," 58.

subtle and oblique.”⁷⁴ He noted that Rosenquist had considered naming the painting *Be My Nigger*, but had been dissuaded as no one “saw any Huck Finn humanity in that title.”⁷⁵ Barrie Hale was the only Canadian critic to register the “disturbing ambiguity” of this work, reflected in the title shifts it had undergone.⁷⁶

In a 2006 interview Rosenquist recalled the discrimination faced by middle class Blacks such as those had had counted among his friends at the Art Students’ League.”⁷⁷ On the same occasion, he drew attention to the connotations he attached to individual elements of the painting:

The main character is a black man, but I painted him pink. The chocolate cake is a giveaway. Of the eyeglasses, one lens is opaque, the other is clear. The painting is held together by a green Chevy, symbol of American middle-class existence. There are the white babies receiving loving care and those black heads stomped on by a faceless suit.⁷⁸

The cake image, drawn from a cake-mix package, may refer to the idiomatic expression: “You cannot tell the colour of a cake from its icing.”⁷⁹ In the American context of the period and even today, the image could suggest cultural assimilation of successful, middle-class African-Americans.

⁷⁴ Swenson, *ibid.*, 59

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Barrie Hale, “The Look of Things,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (10 February 1968): 44–45 in clippings file, James Rosenquist Exhibiton, NGC Library and Archives. At various times, the work has also been titled *The American Negro* and *Hommage to the American Negro*.

⁷⁷ Jan van der Marck, “Reminiscing on the Gulf of Mexico: A Conversation with James Rosenquist,” *American Art*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2006): 99

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Smith recorded this expression in a black notebook linked to a talk in the Gallery on 13 February 1968. The notebook can be found in box 8, file 3 James Rosenquist – Exhibition research material, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.



Painting for the American Negro (1962–3), oil on canvas, triptych, 303 x 553.4 cm. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.

At the time of the Ottawa exhibition, Smith took notes during a walk-through with the artist. On that occasion, Rosenquist told Smith that the grey triangle seen through the left lens of the tinted glasses indicated that this way of seeing was completely false.⁸⁰ The artist affirmed that he had selected the mother bending over her child “because the image reminded him of a shark.”⁸¹ The small, multi-coloured ridges on the inner sides of the three canvases, which seem to be seeping out, suggested that the painting “was holding back great feeling and emotion.”⁸² Rosenquist recommended that the painting be viewed up close notwithstanding its large scale.

In his 2009 memoir, Rosenquist affirmed that *Painting for the American Negro* constituted one of his more overt social commentaries.⁸³ He expressed his belief that

⁸⁰ Brydon Smith, “Rosenquist’s visit – photosensitive,” *ibid.*, NGC Library and Archives.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.* I have not seen this device used in any reproductions of Rosenquist’s other works.

⁸³ James Rosenquist with David Dalton, *Painting Below Zero: Notes on a Life in Art* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 188. This is also the source of the two following quotes.

artists cannot turn a blind eye even if the truth is ugly, “such as how our perceptions of black people are distorted by stereotypes.” He recalled that horse images were used in several of his works to convey the “strange disturbing feeling of being next to a huge creature whose thinking is quite alien to our own.”⁸⁴ The horse motif in this work remains enigmatic, but it may be read as evoking challenges to social communication. Rosenquist often used legs as a stand-in for the body. In this work, the upside-down legs of the two basketball players show the white player in a defensive posture and the black on offense.⁸⁵ Rosenquist placed male, African legs in another work with racial overtones, *Early in the Morning* (1963).⁸⁶

It has long been assumed that Rosenquist’s treatment of civil rights amounted to a passing interest since he did not develop the theme into a series as he did with celebrity, gun violence, war, science, space exploration, etc. His 2009 memoir dispels such assumptions pointing to a strong personal engagement backed up by additional biographical information. The artist remembered his close friendship with the poet LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka) and his wife, and his regret when Jones broke with all his white friends in the mid-1960s.⁸⁷ Smith recorded that Rosenquist expressed concern about Jones’s arrest while in Ottawa.⁸⁸ Interestingly, Smith kept several articles on Jones in his

⁸⁴ Rosenquist, *ibid.*, 104.

⁸⁵ An NGC visitor pointed this out to a docent, Robert Sauvé, who passed on the observation to the author.

⁸⁶ Walter Hopps and Sarah Bancroft, *James Rosenquist: A Retrospective* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2003), 32. The image in this work was based on a news photograph of a South African throwing a rock during a Durban riot.

⁸⁷ Hopps and Bancroft, *ibid.*, 126–7.

⁸⁸ Brydon Smith, “Comments by Rosenquist,” note to file, Curatorial File on *Painting for the American Negro*, National Gallery of Canada.

own archive.⁸⁹ Both men shared a commitment to racial equality, a struggle which marked their generation. Rosenquist may count among the most politically active of the Pop artists. Pop Art has rarely addressed political issues. When it did, Smith pursued it.

It is notable how much attention *Painting for the American Negro* received in the above 2006 interview and 2009 memoir. The painting has also featured in virtually all surveys of Rosenquist's work. It was illustrated, along with *Capillary Action II*, in the catalogue of the touring exhibition organized by the Denver Art Museum in 1985–87.⁹⁰ While not loaned on that occasion, the work was sent to a 1992–3 exhibition on Pop Art organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.⁹¹ Multiple authors have chosen it to illustrate general works about American art, helping to consolidate the work's iconic status.⁹²

In his recent monograph on the artist, Michael Lobel acknowledges the artist's practice of oblique references, but criticizes this work for being too oblique and not, for example, including a recognized civil rights leader."⁹³ As a white liberal and an artist, however, Rosenquist claimed no role to speak for African-Americans, or to highlight a

⁸⁹ See article on Jones in *Kolchur 5* (Spring 1962) and Barry Calaghan, "The Rage of LeRoi Jones," *The Telegram*, 5 August 1967 in box 8, file 1 James Rosenquist – Exhibition research material, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

⁹⁰ Judith Goldman, *James Rosenquist* (New York: Viking-Penguin, 1985), 110–11. This exhibition also travelled to the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the National Museum of American Art (Smithsonian Institution).

⁹¹ Marco Livingstone, ed., *Pop Art* (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1992), 279.

⁹² See for example:

Ellen H. Johnson, *Modern Art and the Object: A Century of Changing Attitudes* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 32.

Robert Taylor, "Painting and Sculpture," in *The Book of Knowledge Annual 1969*, ed. William Shapiro (New York: Grolier Society, 1969), 258.

⁹³ Michael Lobel, *James Rosenquist: Pop Art, Politics, and History in the 1960s*, (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2009), 82–3 and illustration between pages 82 and 83.

particular leader. Teresa Carbone, who included the work in a recent exhibition on art and civil rights in the 1960s, deems it an “emphatic” interrogation and recasting of popular imagery.⁹⁴ Regardless of differing appreciations, the sustained scholarly attention in the United States to this NGC-owned work confirms its standing in Rosenquist’s oeuvre.

Rosenquist’s 2003 Guggenheim retrospective celebrating forty years of artistic production may be viewed as particularly important in consolidating his ranking as a major postwar American artist. The Guggenheim borrowed both of the NGC’s works for this exhibition. The organizers included no fewer than twenty-four of the thirty-two works shown in Ottawa in 1968. By this measure, Smith had indeed succeeded in identifying and gathering key works from the artist’s early years. While Rosenquist has generated less scholarly writing in recent years than other artists Smith collected for the NGC such as Flavin or Judd, he has sustained his artistic reputation over the decades, earning public commissions in the United States and Europe. Notwithstanding personal tragedies and setbacks, he has continued to embody the Americanism and individualism noted by Turner at his Ottawa opening through the quality and variety of his ongoing production.

The other major work acquired by Smith in 1968 was Jackson Pollock’s *No. 29, 1950*. In retrospect, Smith cited this painting-collage first among his significant early acquisitions.⁹⁵ With this work, the NGC expanded its permanent collection into an earlier area of postwar American art, Abstract Expressionism, thereby recovering some of the

⁹⁴ Teresa Carbone, “Exhibit A: Evidence and the Art Object,” in *Witness: Art and Civil Rights in the Sixties*, eds. Teresa Carbone and Kellie Jones (New York: Monacelli Press and Brooklyn Museum, 2014), 85.

⁹⁵ “Interview with Brydon Smith by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002,” box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith interviewed by Kitty Scott, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

ground lost since 1956 when the trustees decided to ignore contemporary American art. Building upon this important acquisition would influence the overall configuration of the collection in coming decades. At the time, it also represented a major financial investment, requiring special authorization.

The NGC's curatorial file and the Pollock-Krasner fonds at the Archives of American Art in the Smithsonian provide the background to how this work came into the NGC collection. In 1964, eight years after Pollock's death, Lee Krasner consigned 144 Pollock paintings to the Marlborough-Gerson Gallery in New York. The asking price at that time for *No. 29, 1950* was \$60,000.⁹⁶ The work did not sell. Two years later, however, Krasner signed a long-term agreement with the gallery in effect from 1966 to 1975. Under this arrangement, an updated museum price of \$75,000 was agreed upon for *No. 29, 1950*.⁹⁷ This amount, though strikingly modest by the standards of today's art market, nonetheless represented a substantial sum for the NGC.

On what was likely his first curatorial trip to New York after his NGC recruitment in 1967, Smith spotted the work at the Marlborough Gallery where he found it "very wonderful, very different, kind of unique."⁹⁸ After an inspection trip by Jean Boggs, Mervyn Ruggles (Conservation), and Smith in late June 1967, the Marlborough Gallery's Stephen Weil wrote to Smith: "I have now given a complete report to Mrs. Pollock and she seemed most pleased by the way things had gone. What a marvelous thing it would

⁹⁶ "Price List for Jackson Pollock Paintings Included in the Marlborough-Gerson Gallery January/February 1964 Catalogue," Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner Papers, circ. 1914-84, box 1 file 54, Archive of American Art, accessed 17 November 2013, http://www.aaa.si.edu/assets/images/collectionsonline/pollock/fullsize/AAA_jpoljack_78

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ "Interview with Brydon by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002", box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith interviewed by Kitty Scott (2001-2002), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

be if this very great painting finally found a permanent home in Ottawa.”⁹⁹ A mail-in ballot was sent to NGC trustees in July 1967, a rare opportunity in the NGC’s institutional history to see a recorded vote. Boggs secured six votes in favour with one opposed and one blank.¹⁰⁰

In her letter to Secretary of State Judy LaMarsh requesting approval for Supplementary Estimates, Boggs cited the absence of any work in the NGC’s collection representing Abstract Expressionism, the reasonable price requested in light of the work’s status as “one of the best documented paintings of the 20th century,” the rapidly rising art market, and the potential interest for Canadian artists.¹⁰¹ The work’s Pollock estate provenance, excellent condition, and prominence in the artist’s *œuvre* would all have counted with Boggs and Smith. The short film by Hans Namuth capturing the work’s creation had gained it a place in the Pollock literature. At the time of purchase, the work had been cited or illustrated in eleven publications.¹⁰² While the unusual glass support intrigued Smith, it may have raised doubts among other potential buyers seeking a more typical work or one less fragile. The use of collage materials would also have aroused

⁹⁹ Stephen E. Weil to Brydon Smith, 30 June 1967, Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada. Weil left in the course of these negotiations to pursue a distinguished career at the Whitney, Hirshhorn, and Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Museum Studies.

¹⁰⁰ Boggs counted Colonel Sydney Oland’s willingness to go along with the majority as a positive vote, although he wrote that he was “not intrigued by abstract expressionist painting.” She expressed no surprise at trustee Frank Panabaker’s negative vote and comment that he had “never seen anything in Pollock’s squiggly doodlings.” See Sidney Oland to Jean Boggs, 10 July 1967 and Frank Panabaker to Jean Boggs, 14 July 1967, Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada. The trustees voting in favour were Jean Raymond (Chair), I. C. Pollock, Dorothy Dyde, Mrs. Hugh MacKay, and John MacAulay. Mrs. Otto Koerner cast the blank ballot, perhaps inadvertently.

¹⁰¹ Jean Boggs to the Hon. Judy LaMarsh, 10 October 1967, Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada.

¹⁰² Francis O’Connor, ed., *Jackson Pollock: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works, Volume 4* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978), 110.

Smith's interest. Smith would often prefer works that showed special features while still reflecting an artist's signature style.

The painting's exhibition history nonetheless confirmed its importance. It had been shown at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1950, a sign of Pollock's early approval. It had toured the United States with MoMA's *Modern Relief* (1951–3); been included in Dorothy Miller's celebrated *15 Americans* show (1952) at MoMA; and then shown again at MoMA 1956.¹⁰³ For *15 Americans*, Dorothy Miller displayed the work in an open frame in the centre of the gallery. Her installation deliberately evoked Duchamp's *The Large Glass*.¹⁰⁴ Situating the work within a broader art historical narrative would also have weighed with Boggs and Smith.

The NGC made the final payment in March 1968, following Parliamentary approval. Smith's enthusiasm permeated the NGC's press release announcing the acquisition of a "delicate, shimmering and lyrical work" in which Pollock "... synthesized the unconscious energies of his mind, the muscular rhythms of his body and inert objects from his environment into harmonious forms in space."¹⁰⁵ *Toronto Star* cultural critic Gail Dexter, conscious of the acquisition's significance, interviewed Smith and analysed Pollock's legacy.¹⁰⁶ The remainder of the Canadian daily press does not appear to have found the arrival of the first Pollock in Canada newsworthy. Arts publications in Canada, Britain and the United States, however, did take notice.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹⁰⁴ Ellen G. Landau, *Jackson Pollock* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989), 197.

¹⁰⁵ National Gallery of Canada Press Release, 19 June 1968, Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada.

¹⁰⁶ Gail Dexter, "Brydon Got His Jackson Pollock," *Toronto Star*, 6 July 1968 in Brydon Smith clippings file, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁰⁷ See: "Accessions of American and Canadian Museums," *Art Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (summer 1969): 234;

Thanks to the Marlborough records in the Krasner-Pollock papers, we can compare this NGC acquisition with other Pollock works for sale on the same occasion. This acquisition represents a rare occasion to evaluate Smith's choice of a major work in comparison with others of broadly similar quality. In addition to *No. 29, 1950*, the Marlborough offering in 1967 included:

Pasiphae (1943) for \$120,000 and now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York;

There were Seven in Eight (1945) for \$90,000 and now at MoMA;

Totem Lesson II (1945) for \$75,000 and now at the National Gallery of Australia;

White Cockatoo No. 24A (1948) for \$100,000 and now in a private collection in California; and

Summertime (1948) for \$175,000 and now at the Tate Modern, London.¹⁰⁸

The unique character of *No. 29, 1950*, its exhibition history, related documentation (film, photographs), and the published references all argued in its favour. Of the paintings noted above, *No. 29, 1950* has drawn the most attention from art historians, albeit in large part because of the Namuth film. In the 1978 catalogue raisonné, only *One: Number 31, 1950* has an equally extensive bibliography. When scale is considered, however, the NGC's more modestly sized work falls short. In addition, the circumstance surrounding its

Art Journal 27, no.1 (Fall 1968): 102;

Brydon Smith, "Recent Acquisitions: The National Gallery – from the United States," *artscanada* XXV, no. 4 (October-November 1968): 47;

François Meyer, "Entretien avec Brydon Smith," *Vie des Arts* XIV, no. 58 (Spring 1970): 58;

"Jackson Pollock's 'No 29'," *The Burlington Magazine* 111 (July 1969): 451, 453. The foregoing may be found in the Curatorial File *No. 29, 1950*.

¹⁰⁸ "Price List for Jackson Pollock Paintings Included in the Marlborough-Gerson Gallery January/February 1964 Catalogue," with annotations dated and signed 3 March 1967, Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner Papers, circ. 1914–84, box 1 file 54, Archive of American Art, accessed 17 November 2013,

http://www.aaa.si.edu/assets/images/collectiononline/pollock/fullsize/AAA_jpoljack_78

creation and experimental technique on glass required a rapid execution in unfavourable conditions. No “cooling off” period occurred after which it could be reworked as per Pollock’s usual practice. Notably, however, none of the large Pollock works above ended up in museums until the 1980s. In any event, Smith seems to have wanted *No. 29, 1950* first and foremost.

Smith deserves credit for seizing the moment in 1967, effectively the only time a first-rate Pollock has fallen within the NGC’s ambit. Boggs validated his recommendation and lined up approvals for the purchase. She had the responsibility to estimate how much the trustees and the Minister would be prepared to approve. Former NGC Director Pierre Théberge, then a curator, recalled that the amount presented real challenges.¹⁰⁹

The enduring interest in *No. 29, 1950* arises in large part from the awkward, but ultimately productive, collaboration between Pollock and Hans Namuth, a young German refugee and photographer. The circumstances of the filming of the work have been described in some length in Naifeh and White Smith’s comprehensive biography.¹¹⁰ In this ten-minute colour film, Namuth and Pollock created a powerfully resonant image of an American genius performing what T.J. Clark has described as “metaphories of masculinity...space, scale, action, trace, energy...”¹¹¹ Barbara Rose argues that this film and related photographs did much to foster the idea of art as an event and the artist as a performer.¹¹² The simultaneous completion of *No. 29, 1950* and of Namuth’s filming of its creation on November 25, 1950 were to mark an end to the two years of Pollock’s

¹⁰⁹ Interview with the author on 9 January 2014.

¹¹⁰ Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (Aiken, S.C.: Woodward/White, 1989), 647–53.

¹¹¹ T.J. Clark, “Jackson Pollock’s Abstraction,” in *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal, 1945–1964*, ed. Serge Guilbaut (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990), 229.

¹¹² Barbara Rose, ed., *Pollock Paintings* (New York: Agrinde Publications, c.1980), 78.

most productive (and sober) period, and a turn away from his experiments in pure abstraction.

In a letter to Smith following the NGC's purchase, Namuth claimed that the idea of filming the execution of a painting on glass was his own:

I wanted to show the painter at work facing you, the onlooker, which cannot be the case if the painting is on an easel or on the floor... Pollock liked my idea, and we both worked it out together. He was a great carpenter and built the construction which held the glass at a sufficient height for me to lie under.¹¹³

Lee Krasner, however, always maintained that Pollock had been inspired to paint on glass by Duchamp.¹¹⁴ Smith met with Krasner at the Marlborough Gallery in May 1969 to discuss the work. While no notes have been found from that meeting, Smith did write afterwards to thank her and express the hope that he might pursue the conversation at The Springs, Long Island during the summer.¹¹⁵

The accessibility of the Namuth film and photographs has given scope for many critics and scholars to write about the NGC work without necessarily travelling to Ottawa to see the original. Although the work travelled in the 1950s, the NGC has never agreed to loan it, even when requested by such prestigious institutions as MoMA (1998) and the Tate Modern (1999).¹¹⁶ Post-1968 scholarship about the work may have diminished as a result.

¹¹³ Hans Namuth to Brydon Smith, 28 April 1968, Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada.

¹¹⁴ "Pollock's Studio: Interview with Lee Krasner by Barbara Rose," in *Pollock Paintings*, 92.

¹¹⁵ Brydon Smith to Lee Krasner, 8 May 1969, General Correspondence, box 2, file 26, Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner Papers, circ. 1914–84, box 1 file 54, Archive of American Art, accessed 17 November 2013,

http://www.aaa.si.edu/assets/images/collectiononline/pollock/fullsize/AAA_jpoljack_78

¹¹⁶ Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada. The work is on shatterproof, Herculite glass used in car windshields. It may not be as fragile as it

Without the experience of the original, historians and critics are likely to overlook the differing visual effects on each side of *No. 29, 1950* or to underestimate its impact as a work of art in its own right.¹¹⁷ Smith and Boggs, however, did not overlook these differences. In the NGC press release of 19 June 1968 announcing the work's acquisition, Smith quoted from Frank O'Hara's 1959 monograph where the poet observed that *No. 29, 1950* "is the same masterpiece from opposite sites of viewing."¹¹⁸ Jean Boggs's 1971 history of the NGC collection provided commentary about each side of the work.¹¹⁹ More recently, German curator Jürgen Harten, who has viewed the work, underlined its multi-layered collage features.¹²⁰

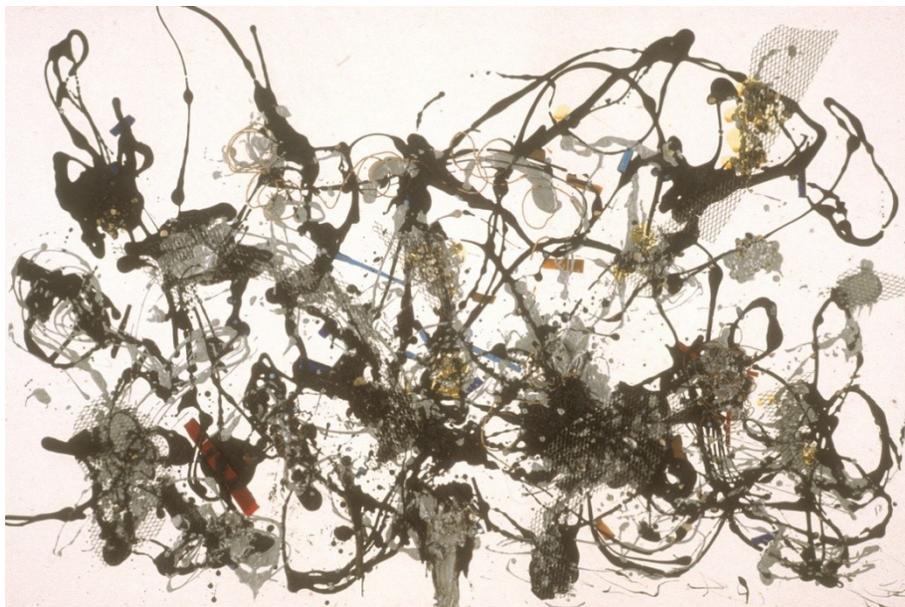
appears. According to Namuth, the glass cost \$10. See Pepe Karmel, "The Films and Photographs of Hans Namuth" in Kirk Varnedoe and Pepe Karmel, eds., *Jackson Pollock: New Approaches* (New York: Museum of Modern Art and Harry Abrams, 1999), 112.

¹¹⁷ A Pepe Karmel essay does illustrate both sides of the work, though the focus is on Namuth. See Pepe Karmel, "Pollock at Work: The Films and Photographs of Hans Namuth," in Kirk Varnedoe and Pepe Karmel, eds. *Jackson Pollock* (New York: MoMA and Harry Abrams, 1998), 113, 274

¹¹⁸ "National Gallery of Canada Acquires Canada's First Pollock," 19 June 1968, NGC Press Release, Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada.

¹¹⁹ Jean Sutherland Boggs, *The National Gallery of Canada*, 130.

¹²⁰ Jürgen Harten, *Siqueiros/Pollock: Pollock/Siqueiros* (Dusseldorf: Kunsthalle, 1995), 53.



No. 29, 1950, 121.9 x 182.9 cm., purchased 1968. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.

What Smith learned from his 1969 interview with Krasner was no doubt incorporated into a lecture he gave at Carleton University on 27 January 1970.¹²¹ He saw the work as a record of its own creation and an important statement about action painting. He revealed his abiding interest in science by reviewing the technical specifications of the materials, including the aluminum-coloured paint. He noted that on the face of *No. 29, 1950* viewed by Pollock, the very real presence of the collage materials (steel, coiled string, beads, coloured plastic, pebbles) had not been completely abstracted by the paint. The embedded objects found in the artist's studio and yard evoked the physical surroundings of the work's creation. The reverse side, dominated by the aluminum paint, appears more purely abstract. Smith claimed that Pollock was fond of this work and would take it outdoors to observe "the landscape around his studio through his abstract creation." In a 1971 lecture

¹²¹ "Lecture Notes," undated, box 10, file 9 Jackson Pollock – Lectures, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives. All citations in this paragraph are from this source.

to a different audience, Smith characterized the work as “energy suspended in space,” effectively eliminating all background.¹²²

Following his retirement, Smith returned to Pollock in a 2002 essay for the *National Gallery Review*. He structured the article to flow from Pollock’s response to a question from Lee Krasner about why he began many works with figurative elements, which were only retained in varying degrees, or not at all, in the final work. Pollock’s answer: “I choose to veil the imagery,” became Smith’s departure point.¹²³ He reviewed the creative stages entailed in *No. 29, 1950*, noting Pollock’s initial, repeated gesture of running his fingers in a circular motion over the glass “to establish its physical relationship to him.” Smith noted the work presents itself quite differently on the reverse side with silvered abstract shapes effectively “veiling” the collage material and other colours. He concluded that Pollock was comfortable using both abstraction *and* figuration, though critics of the period had attempted to establish a rigid, irreconcilable separation between the two practices.

Smith’s longstanding interest in this work thus stretched over a forty-year period from his student years to post-retirement, in effect bookending his career. His observations grew more complex and layered over the years and following many hours of direct study. At no point, however, did Smith situate the work theoretically or relate Pollock to the broader art-historical or cultural context. Just as Smith eschewed labels for artists, he avoided suggesting theoretical concepts which might inhibit more open-ended

¹²² Harten, *Siqueiros/Pollock: Pollock/Siqueiros*, 53. Harten’s citation refers to a lecture by Smith to the University Art Association of Canada in Halifax, 4–6 March 1971. The notes for this specific lecture have not been located in the Brydon Smith fonds.

¹²³ B. H. Freidman, “An Interview with Lee Krasner Pollock,” in *Jackson Pollock: Black and White* (New York, 1969), 7. Cited in Brydon Smith, “Jackson Pollock: Abstracting Over the Figure,” *National Gallery of Canada Review III* (2002): 29. Subsequent quotes in this paragraph are from the same Smith article.

interpretations, or which had not formed part of the artist's original plan. His scientific training placed primary importance on close personal observation.

The relation of *No. 29, 1950* to architecture was made by Pollock himself in a late 1950 interview with William Wright, who noticed the work in his studio. Pollock's response is worth noting: "Well that's something new for me. That's the first work I've done on glass and I find it very exciting. I think the possibilities of using painting on glass in modern architecture – in modern construction – terrific."¹²⁴ Other peers of Pollock shared an interest in architecture, in working on a large scale, and in controlling the environment where their works were displayed.

No. 29, 1950 can be linked to a chapel project which grew out of discussions in the summer of 1950 among potential Catholic patrons, including curator James Johnson Sweeney.¹²⁵ This group wanted to explore for the United States the concept of a modern chapel such as Matisse was then executing at Vence in the south of France.¹²⁶ Alfonso Ossorio, Pollock's and Lee Krasner's wealthy friend and fellow artist, acted as a go-between and catalyst. At Ossorio's urging, Pollock became involved, but he insisted that his friend Tony Smith, an architect who also happened to be Catholic, do the design. Tony Smith's plans were still awaited when Pollock created *No. 29, 1950*. The architect recalled being questioned by Pollock about applying painting on glass to the proposed

¹²⁴ "Interview with William Wright," reproduced in Rose, *Pollock Paintings*, Annex 10, 112 and in O'Connor, *Catalogue Raisonné*, Vol. IV, 251. The interview was never broadcast and may not have been known to the NGC at the time of the acquisition. Krasner claims that Pollock had considered installing *No. 29, 1950* into their porch structure. See: Rose, *ibid.*, 84.

¹²⁵ Robert Storr, "A Man of Parts," in *Tony Smith, Architect, Painter, Sculptor* (New York: Museum of Modern Art and Harry Abrams, 1998), 16–17, 45–47.

¹²⁶ Pollock had shown curiosity about Matisse's project. See Robert Storr, "A Piece of the Action," in Varnedoe and Karmel, *Jackson Pollock: New Approaches*, 30 and 64.

chapel windows after the screening of the Namuth film, which premiered at MoMA on June 14, 1951.¹²⁷

In 1952, with Tony Smith's architectural sketches at last completed, Ossorio arranged a meeting with the potential patrons to float the proposal.¹²⁸ Pollock himself is not recorded as present. In his final plans, Pollock's paintings on glass were envisioned as clerestory windows.¹²⁹ In the event, Smith's unconventional, suspended honeycomb design met with incomprehension and Pollock's Christian ethos was questioned.¹³⁰ This interesting, albeit aborted, proposal may be seen as part of the history of *No. 29, 1950*. A later attempt to associate some later Pollock works with religious imagery gave rise to scholarly controversy.¹³¹ Whatever his own religious views, Pollock was interested in the relationship between art and architecture, and exploring the architectural potential of painting on glass.

Brydon Smith ensured that *No. 29, 1950* enjoyed a fitting architectural setting for its permanent installation. In the 1980s when planning the interior of the new building on Sussex Drive, Smith conceived a room installed around the Pollock and works subsequently acquired by four other postwar Americans: Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still and Tony Smith. The theme for the high-ceilinged gallery was to be "wholeness." Smith engaged Canadian artist Ron Martin to work with him in resolving

¹²⁷ E. A. Carmean, "The Church Project: Pollock's Passion Themes," *Art in America* 70, no. 6 (Summer 1982):114.

¹²⁸ Naifeh and White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga*, 681. The Catholic representatives included *inter alia* Father Ford of Columbia University and Rosalind Constable of *Time/Life*.

¹²⁹ Storr, "A Man of Parts," 17.

¹³⁰ Naifeh and White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga*, 681.

¹³¹ See: E. A. Carmean, "The Church Project: Pollock's Passion Themes," *Art in America* 70, no. 6 (Summer 1982): 110–22 and Rosalind Krauss's reply "Contra Carmean," *The Abstract Pollock*, *ibid.*, 123–31.

the final installation. Martin saw the significance of Pollock's work in "its capacity to convey a self-reflexive knowledge of our being in the world, and is, in fact, our link with what is the earliest and essential principle of late Modernist Abstract Art."¹³² The NGC's Pollock is appropriately displayed in a free-standing frame allowing for viewing on both sides. The NGC display evokes Dorothy Miller's framing for 15 Americans, which met with Pollock's approval.¹³³ The viewer may choose to imagine the work's potential for architecture and a possible affinity with Duchamp's masterpiece.

Smith made an unconventional but prescient choice with his selection of *No. 29, 1950*. The NGC secured an influential and unique painting with impeccable credentials. It remains a work which any modern art museum would be only too willing to display today. The painting now counts among the NGC's treasures for the lasting benefit of Canadians.

¹³² Ron Martin, "Layout of the Red and the American Room," Curatorial File for *No. 29, 1950*, National Gallery of Canada.

¹³³ Rose, *Pollock Painting*, 83. The current frame appears to be of the NGC's own manufacture, although no written record has been found.

Chapter Two – From Flavin to Judd

The 1969 Dan Flavin retrospective represented a significantly more ambitious project for Smith than the James Rosenquist exhibition the previous year. With Flavin, the NGC would showcase for the first time an emerging art, now termed Minimalism, although Smith always eschewed this label as reductive and inaccurate. After starting his career as a painter and then experimenting with electric lights attached to square supports which he called “icons,” Flavin turned in 1963 to fluorescent light. Commercially available fluorescent tubes provided the artist with line and colour for his abstract arrangements fixed to floors, walls, corners and ceilings. His sculpture-installations also diffused light and colour in surrounding gallery spaces, engaging with the architecture while creating subliminal immersive environments. In contrast to other artists associated with Minimalism such as Donald Judd, Flavin often expressively titled and dedicated his works with references to biography, art history, literature, or current events. At the time of the Ottawa exhibition, Flavin’s new medium had not yet gained widespread critical acceptance and was unfamiliar to Canadian viewers. On a practical level for the NGC, installing large numbers of fluorescent lights would raise safety, technical and budgetary challenges. Finally, working with a highly articulate, reputedly temperamental artist seeking control over how his works were presented and documented would call for an exceptional degree of curatorial forbearance and collaboration.

Smith first heard about Flavin in late 1965 from the artist’s illustrated autobiographical sketch in *Artforum*.¹³⁴ Intrigued by this reading, Smith purchased and installed a four-foot, red fluorescent light fixture at his home, where he found the light a

¹³⁴ Brydon E. Smith, “Recollections and Thoughts about Dan Flavin,” in *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, eds. Michael Govan and Tiffany Bell (New York, New Haven and London: Dia Art Foundation and Yale University Press, 2004), 131.

“silent, steady state,” both “radiant and contemplative.”¹³⁵ His first direct encounter with Flavin’s work occurred at the 1966 Primary Structures show held at the Jewish Museum in New York. In spite of the unconventional medium, the quality of the aesthetic experience of light met his criteria for serious art. It allowed the kind of focussed concentration which Smith practised as a curator.

Active planning for the exhibition began in early 1968.¹³⁶ The selection of works to include emerged from intensive discussions over the summer of 1968 which Flavin termed “research purges.”¹³⁷ Smith paid his first visit to the Flavin home at Lake Valhalla, Cold Spring, New York on 4 September 1968. He and Flavin began corresponding that month; Smith’s earliest letter on file is dated 10 September. Flavin and his wife, Sonja, paid their first visit to Ottawa on 8–9 October as guests of the Smiths. A few days later Flavin wrote to Smith: “I appreciate the sense of mutual purpose quickly developed and the appreciable space offered for exposition. Yes, I can confirm your initiative.”¹³⁸

Smith and Flavin reviewed more than a decade of the artist’s archive, which documented an extensive chronology of solo and group exhibitions at commercial and university galleries. Flavin wanted to offer a “fairly full review of what I have attempted

¹³⁵ Ibid. After substituting a daylight tube for the red, Smith put the fixture to practical use in lighting his basement. On another occasion, Smith recalled using a white tube for his test. See “Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002,” Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives.

¹³⁶ Jean Boggs invitation to VAG Director A. Emery to host the exhibition, dated 13 March 1968, is the earliest piece of correspondence found on file. See: box 29 1/5, file Flavin Exhibition, Exhibition Files for *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹³⁷ Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 8–10 November 1968, box 29 5/5, file 18 Flavin – Damaged Icons, *ibid.*

¹³⁸ Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, postcard of 10–11 October 1968, *ibid.*

since about 1957” with an overall emphasis on the fluorescent works.¹³⁹ Smith agreed that showing the early works would provide a “more varied and stronger exhibition.”¹⁴⁰ Flavin would loan most of the works, many of which had never been exhibited publicly. Smith and Flavin were in effect constructing a career narrative, an unusual step for an artist’s first major museum show. They sought to demonstrate that Flavin’s early paintings, assemblages and icons merited attention in their own right as well as for any transitional role on the way to the mature work in fluorescent lights. Flavin may also have wanted to assert his art-historical legitimacy, distinguishing his use of industrial products from Duchamp’s Readymades. The curatorial approach adopted in Ottawa has exerted a lasting influence over the critical reception of the artist’s work. At that date, of course, no one knew that Flavin would devote himself exclusively to working with fluorescent light.

The correspondence from the artist’s side, while remaining respectful and collaborative, soon led to more detailed requests. Flavin asked for sessions with each important catalogue author before they began writing their entries to avoid factual errors or “opiniative excesses.”¹⁴¹ Flavin’s demands tested the NGC’s ability to accommodate him. The reality of budgets soon set limits even for the friendliest curator. For both aesthetic reasons and costs, the drawings, diagrams, and watercolours were to be displayed in cases rather than framed.¹⁴² Six months before the opening with translation and printing deadlines looming, Smith had to advise Flavin that he could not include

¹³⁹ Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 17–18 September 1968, *ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Brydon Smith to Dan Flavin, 11 October 1968, *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 26 February 1969, *ibid.* Subsequent information in this paragraph is found in the same letter.

¹⁴² Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 30 September 1968, *ibid.*

more works, while underscoring growing NGC concerns about projected installation costs.¹⁴³

In addition to the works in the catalogue, Flavin designed seven installations, or “situations” as he termed them, for the fourth and fifth floors of the NGC. These works represented a significant aesthetic initiative, making innovative use of the NGC’s open floor plans and low ceilings. At that date, most visitors would have had no prior experience of an immersive art environment. The term “installation” did not come into common usage until the end of the 1970s. Four of the seven works were dedicated to NGC personnel: Jean Boggs, Jane and Brydon Smith, Josef Halmy and “S.M.” (Sherrill Mosley). Not all were installed in the subsequent Vancouver and New York showings.¹⁴⁴ These creations scaled up Flavin’s art, creating greater engagement with the architectural space and suggesting future directions for his work.

Having completed their selection of 114 works by May 1969, Smith and Flavin turned their attention to the catalogue entries. Around this time, the official title of the exhibition was agreed upon: fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin.¹⁴⁵ The degree of involvement by the artist in drafting entries likely broke new ground at the NGC. However, the exhibition was planned in a North American context in which artists were increasingly

¹⁴³ Brydon Smith to Dan Flavin, 14 March 1969, *ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ The installation *three sets of tangented arcs in daylight and cool white (to Jenny and Ira Licht)*, the only Flavin work incorporating curves, and *untitled (to Heiner Friedrich)* were mounted only in Ottawa. The works *untitled (to Jean Boggs)* and *untitled (to Jane and Brydon Smith)* were shown at all three venues. The work *an artificial barrier of green fluorescent light (to Trudie and Enno Develing)* was show in Ottawa and Vancouver. A blue version was constructed at the Jewish Museum. Finally, *untitled (to S.M. with all the admiration and love which I can sense and summon)* was shown only in Ottawa and Vancouver, in a somewhat different space at the latter venue. See Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 276, 287–9.

¹⁴⁵ An earlier title had been *An Exposition of Fluorescent Light and Other Matters from Dan Flavin*. See Ira Licht, “Dan Flavin,” *artscanada* XXV, no. 5 (December 1968): 62.

writing about art, their own and that of their peers.¹⁴⁶ The drafts for the catalogue entries illustrate the creative process involving artist and curator. Smith wrote the initial version following “research purges” with the artist. Flavin then submitted hand-written corrections on the typed draft, most often clarifying the language.

The entry for *icon IV (the pure land) (to David John Flavin [1962–63])*, now in the NGC’s collection, provides an interesting example of the drafting process. Flavin deleted Smith’s initial reference to Amitaba, the Buddha of Infinite Light, associated with the “pure land” in the title. Flavin explained: “I had no such comprehensive understanding of the pure land. I don’t like the literalization of symbolic content with medium in overdrawn text.”¹⁴⁷ His wishes were honoured in this instance. More recently, respected Flavin scholar and curator Michael Govan, perhaps unaware of Flavin’s objection, has chosen to cite the Buddhist allusion.¹⁴⁸ In this instance, Smith might have insisted on his reference as an interesting entry point for observers without precluding other readings. Flavin, moreover, was not consistent in his opposition to explaining his titles. The phrase “THE PURE LAND” is inscribed on Flavin’s grave, along with the title of Handel’s 1713 hymn “Eternal Source of Light Divine.”¹⁴⁹ It clearly held a deep meaning for him. Overall, the catalogue entries show a creative dialogue and synthesis between artist and curator. The publication has gained lasting documentary value precisely because of the artist’s detailed input and his satisfaction with the final version.

¹⁴⁶ See Leanne Carroll, “Artist-Writers: From Abstract-Expressionist Hostility to 1960s Canonicity,” *RACAR XXXVIII* 1 (2013): 45–53.

¹⁴⁷ Draft catalogue entries, box 28 1/5, file 36 Incomplete Catalogue Information, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light...from Dan Flavin, etc., NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁴⁸ Amitaba represents the Buddha who presides in the Pure Land, “a wistful way station on the spiritual journey to complete enlightenment.” See Michael Govan, “Irony of Light,” in *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 26.

¹⁴⁹ See Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 106, footnote 25.

Flavin and Smith recruited American contacts to contribute essays. Flavin secured his friend Donald Judd's reluctant agreement to provide a statement, overcoming his intent to disengage from writing about art. Artist Mel Bochner and art historian Ira Licht also agreed to provide independent texts. The Licht essay was never delivered. He had insisted on waiting until all the works were chosen before writing his submission and could not meet the NGC deadline. Two essays in the catalogue have, however, earned ongoing scholarly interest. Flavin's revised autobiographical sketch opened an ongoing debate on the role, if any, of spirituality in his art. The text by Donald Judd addressed the relative roles of light, colour and space in creating particular visible states, or phenomena, in Flavin's works.¹⁵⁰ Judd's effort to fit Flavin into his conceptual framework resulted in a classic text of Minimalism.

As the printing deadline approached, budget constraints inspired innovations. The Castelli and Dwan Galleries, which jointly represented Flavin in 1969, agreed to pay for four colour plates, a precedent for the NGC.¹⁵¹ With funds scarce and colour an essential feature of Flavin's art, Smith and the NGC gave priority to the quality of the catalogue. The budget also precluded separate French and English editions. The bilingual format functioned effectively as regards the entries on individual works, with the English text placed above and separate from the French. In the essay sections, however, the occasional lack of separation between the two languages created a visually impenetrable page of text.

¹⁵⁰ Donald Judd, "Aspects of Dan Flavin's Work," *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1969, 27–8. This often cited essay was reprinted with the NGC's permission in Donald Judd, "Aspects of Flavin," *Art and Artists* (March 1970): 48–9.

¹⁵¹ Brydon Smith to A. Witty, Publications, memo of 1 November 1969, box 5/5, file Other, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

Flavin and Smith strove as well for innovation in graphic design. Flavin wrote to Smith: “Please reiterate to Mrs. Emori [the designer] that I sense that I like the developing block-like bulk of the small catalogue. Let’s continue to set graphic precedents.”¹⁵² Diana Nemiroff viewed the black, glossy cover with white text as a graphic interpretation of Flavin’s work and the catalogue as a whole a model of careful attention to detail.¹⁵³ The square format fits nicely into one’s hand and would have been well suited to consultation during a visit. The distinctive shape asserts that the catalogue has been a creative endeavour involving artist, curator and designer.

As the initial catalogue did not include Flavin’s seven special installations, the NGC contracted with *artscanada* to produce a supplement. Flavin and Smith again jointly drafted the entries. The magazine used its regular size and paper, without colour or special graphics. As Jack Burnham noted in his review, these installations would represent the heart of the exhibition for many visitors yet were relegated to a “Xerox supplement.”¹⁵⁴ We are, nevertheless, fortunate to have at least this additional documentation, as Flavin never authorized the subsequent reconstruction of these installations. They have, notwithstanding, earned their place in his interim catalogue raisonné. Their record exists in the photographs and documentation from the Ottawa exhibition, another reason it remains a point of reference for Flavin scholars.

The final installation itself presented particular challenges. The NGC’s agreement with Flavin covered the period 19 August 1969 to 15 September 1969 for a maximum of

¹⁵² Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 6 July 1969, box 29 5/5, file 18 Flavin, Dan, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁵³ Diana Nemiroff, *3 x 3: Flavin, Andre, Judd* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2003), 28.

¹⁵⁴ Jack Burnham, “A Dan Flavin Retrospective in Ottawa,” in Paula Feldman and Karsten Schubert, eds., *It Is What It Is: Writings on Dan Flavin since 1964* (London: Ridinghouse, Thames and Hudson, 2004), 74.

28 days. By the summer of 1969, Boggs advised that she expected serious trouble with trustees and even Parliament if the funds for the upcoming “Indian and Eskimo Exhibition,” were not double those spent on Flavin.¹⁵⁵

The exhibition encompassed six rooms on two floors, possibly the most space the NGC had devoted at that point to a contemporary artist. Flavin’s notes on the floor plans contain very specific requests and questions regarding installation details and modifications to the layout.”¹⁵⁶ Some works required new spaces to be constructed, including a 64-foot corridor. All cords and connections had to be masked to respect Flavin’s aesthetic criteria. Flavin had never previously been accorded this large a canvas and took full advantage of the opportunity. In the event, the Ottawa crew performed well. Flavin reportedly told Smith that the engineer was the best he had ever worked with.¹⁵⁷

Mounting the exhibition posed similar challenges for the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) and the Jewish Museum. When Smith had to delay his arrival in Vancouver a week before the opening, Flavin fired off a sharply worded telegram:

BRYDON DAMN IT, I EXPECTED YOU AS AGREED AND NOT ON MONDAY AS SONJA REPORTED I RESPECT FAMILY PROBLEMS BUT YOU ARE CURATOR OF OUR EFFORTS TOO I DON’T UNDERSTAND BEST REGARDS. DAN.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Jean Boggs memorandum to Brydon Smith and Jack MacGillivray, 8 July 1969, box 29 5/5, file Other, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives. Boggs was referring to the exhibition held 21 November 1969–11 January 1970 titled Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo art from Canada.

¹⁵⁶ See set of drawings in box 26, file 10 Dan Flavin, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁵⁷ Jack Burnham, “A Dan Flavin Retrospective in Ottawa,” *Artforum* VIII, no. 4 (December 1969): 53.

¹⁵⁸ Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 4 November 1969, box 29 5/5, file Other, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

VAG Senior Curator Doris Shadbolt wrote to Jean Boggs praising Smith's help in installing the exhibition and stating that it would have been "extremely difficult, if not impossible, without him."¹⁵⁹ Karl Katz, Director of the Jewish Museum, thanked Smith in carefully worded terms: "Thanks to your initial conception and your extraordinary help in working with Dan, the show has come off beautifully."¹⁶⁰ Following three installations, an exhausted Smith and Flavin faced daunting new problems with reluctant lenders and differing European electric fixtures. As a result, the NGC and the artist agreed to cancel the planned showing at the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven.¹⁶¹

The 12 September 1969 Ottawa opening assembled patrons, artists, and curators from Canada and the USA. NGC openings in that period attracted large crowds, including members of the political class. Carefully orchestrated *vernissages* formed part of Jean Boggs's strategy of preparing the ground for eventual Cabinet approval of a new gallery building.¹⁶² Speaking to a packed auditorium, the normally reticent Flavin offered a heart-felt appreciation for Smith's contribution: "Therefore Brydon and myself have fairly scrupulously sought to represent the important emphases of my arts throughout the years...But take it from me and the resourceful and relentless Mr. Smith, we are satisfied with the most that we have assembled for you."¹⁶³ As we have seen in the correspondence

¹⁵⁹ Doris Shadbolt to Jean Boggs, 25 November 1969, box 29 1/5, file Flavin Exhibition, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁶⁰ Karl Katz to Brydon Smith, 26 January 1970, box 29 1/5, file Flavin Exhibition, *ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Brydon Smith to J. Leering 4/11/69 and 29/1/70, box 29 4/5, file catalogue distribution (costs and requests), *ibid.* Flavin also wanted time to rethink his overall plans for a European showing.

¹⁶² Gyde Shepherd, former NGC Curator of European Art, email to the author 19 January 2014.

¹⁶³ "Dan Flavin's opening speech at fluorescent light, etc. 12 September 1969," box 29 5/5, file Dan Flavin – Misc., Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

with Smith, Flavin could be critical in private feedback to curators but on this public occasion graciously expressed his sincere appreciation.

At Flavin's suggestion, the NGC invited Barnett Newman to speak at the opening. Known for his encouragement of younger artists, Newman paid tribute to Flavin's authentic artistic vision and praised his ability to turn the material of light into a personal statement.¹⁶⁴ Smith's first encounter with Newman would lead to an ongoing relationship with the artist and his wife as well as important NGC acquisitions.

Also at Flavin's suggestion, and consistent with Smith's own penchant for science, Terry McGowan, an illuminating engineer from General Electric (GE) headquarters in Ohio, gave a lecture. His well-received presentation evoked the history of electricity; the chemistry and colour spectrum of fluorescent lighting; and the relations between light, art and architecture.¹⁶⁵

The variety of international requests for the catalogue reflected Flavin's growing reputation and Smith's expanding network of contacts: International Association of Art Critics (Paris), Tate Gallery, Clark Art Institute, Courtauld Institute, Galerie Bischofberger (Zurich), Pasadena Art Museum. American critic Lucy Lippard regretted she had been unable to attend the Ottawa showing while indicating that she had heard "glowing reports."¹⁶⁶ Ronald Alley of the Tate described the catalogue as "excellent."¹⁶⁷ Mel Bochner congratulated Smith for his intelligent entries and conveyed his pride at

¹⁶⁴ Barnett Newman, transcript of talk given at the opening of "fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin," 12 September 1969, box 29 5/5, file Dan Flavin – Misc., *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Untitled lecture notes, box 9, file 1 Dan Flavin – Fluorescent Light, etc. (1961, 1966, 1969–72), *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Lucy Lippard to Brydon Smith, postcard dated 11 November 1969, box 29 1/5, file 37 Catalogue Requests and Catalogue Information, *ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Ronald Alley to Brydon Smith, 23 October 1969, box 29 5/5, file Flavin, *ibid.*

being part of the publication whose illustrations he described as “beautiful, powerful, generous.”¹⁶⁸

For others, however, the perceived extent of artistic input raised issues of curatorial authority. In a poke at Flavin more than Smith, seasoned British critic Lawrence Alloway described the catalogue as “full of detailed information, not the sort a curator digs up but the sort that an artist thrusts on him.”¹⁶⁹ Alloway returned to this concern in 1975 in a think piece which has found a place in the literature on museum studies and curating. As an example of alleged curatorial subservience to artists, Alloway cited, *inter alia*, the NGC exhibition:

Deference is owed to the artist but an excess of it can lead to inflated or lopsided shows, such as Brydon Smith’s Dan Flavin (National Gallery of Canada, 1969) or Tucker’s Rosenquist (Whitney Museum, 1972). Smith’s catalogue contains a great deal of information but he was clearly prevented from interpreting it.¹⁷⁰

Alloway goes on to assert that curators must be *either* interpreters *or* agents for somebody else and, if the latter, “*either* the artist’s servant *or* the market’s slave.” (author’s italics) These invented, arbitrary binaries do not convey the complex realities found in relationships between an artist and curator, each with their own style and personality. Rather than being prevented, Smith often chose to minimize interpretation to allow the works of art to speak for themselves. Alloway’s comments portray above all his disillusion with growing, market-driven influence on museums.

More recently, eminent critic and curator Robert Storr has cautioned against turning catalogues into vanity publications for the artist and underlined the need for final

¹⁶⁸ Mel Bochner to Brydon Smith, 25 November 1969, box 29 5/5, file Flavin, *ibid*.

¹⁶⁹ Lawrence Alloway, “Art,” *The Nation*, 9 February 1970, 155.

¹⁷⁰ Lawrence Alloway, “The Great Curatorial Dim-Out,” *Artforum* XIII, no. 9 (May 1975): 33. The article was reprinted in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, eds. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 2006), 221–30.

curatorial/editorial say.¹⁷¹ Had Smith fallen into this trap? No, the modestly scaled and budgeted NGC catalogue served its purpose with an economy of means. Smith and the NGC always retained final editorial say. The catalogue entries convey succinctly the history of each work, suggesting the artist's intention in an accessible fashion, but also offer content of scholarly interest which only the artist could provide. The NGC had, in fact, opened up creative space for an exceptionally articulate contemporary artist while producing an excellent product, appropriate for the occasion and of lasting documentary value.

The correspondence between artist and curator and their collaboration on the catalogue suggest that Flavin, who wrote knowledgeably about art, merited more agency than most on the continuum of curatorial-artistic authority. As noted above, Flavin's additions improved and clarified the language of the catalogue entries. The artist deleted lengthy descriptions of methods and materials. In one rare instance above, we have argued that Smith might have insisted on his original allusion. A mutually supportive artist-curator partnership drew on their relative strengths. Knowing that American artists and art historians could comment credibly and attract critical attention in the USA, Smith chose to play to their strengths rather than do his own essay. When Licht did not deliver his text as planned, however, the catalogue lost important critical substance.

It is clear that Flavin would have been unwilling to work with a curator he did not trust and whose intelligence he did not hold in high regard. Given his close involvement in its production, experts now regard the 1969 Ottawa catalogue as definitive in respect to

¹⁷¹ Robert Storr, "Show and Tell," in *What Makes A Great Exhibition*, ed. Paula Marincola, (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2006), 28.

the artist's early works.¹⁷² A successful Ottawa exhibition and authoritative catalogue demanded Flavin's buy-in, based on confidence in Smith and mutual respect. While Alloway and later Storr raise legitimate issues around curatorial authority in general, the Smith-Flavin tandem represents a particular case in which the curator and artist effectively complemented one another.

The exhibition itself attracted attention south of the border where Flavin counted both enemies and supporters. Jan van der Marck, curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, wrote to Smith: "It is an exhibition which has impressed me more than any other in recent memory, and I wouldn't have missed it for anything."¹⁷³ Art critic and theorist Jack Burnham, then a fellow at MIT's Institute for Advanced Visual Studies, alerted Smith to his forthcoming positive review but anticipated a negative reaction from the artist: "I know that whatever I say, Flavin will be unhappy with the results, however, I think you will agree when you see the finished product that Flavin will know he has been reviewed by somebody who can read beyond and behind the Don Judd tight-assed prose."¹⁷⁴ As promised, Burnham's review ranked among the most thoughtful in the American cultural media, singling out Smith's role and endorsing his curatorial strategy of including early works even though many visitors might have been tempted to head directly to the fluorescent installations.¹⁷⁵

On the negative side, John Canaday published a condescending review in the *New York Times*, rejecting retrospectives for young artists as marketing tools, and indicating

¹⁷² Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 207.

¹⁷³ Jan van der Marck to Brydon Smith, 15 September 1969, box 29 5/5, file Other, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁷⁴ Jack Burnham to Brydon Smith, 23 October 1969, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Jack Burnham, "A Dan Flavin Retrospective in Ottawa," *Artforum* VIII, no. 4 (December 1969): 49.

that he wanted no truck with Flavin's art or the medium of fluorescent light, which he called "neon."¹⁷⁶ While Canaday's known anti-modernist biases could be discounted, his writing in this instance appeared closed-minded and superficial. Surprisingly, perhaps intentionally, he made no mention of Smith, the catalogue, or the NGC. Canaday's real argument lay with Flavin. His comment on retrospectives for young artists points to the novelty of the practice at that time as well as the potential impact on the contemporary art market.

Another heavyweight critic, Lawrence Alloway, reviewed the exhibition for *The Nation*. Like Canaday, he had viewed it at the Jewish Museum. Notwithstanding his earlier noted reservations about the catalogue, Alloway wrote a balanced piece welcoming the concept of a retrospective for younger artists and finding the works themselves rewarding.¹⁷⁷ While he found the early objects of interest, he considered them overexposed compared to the fluorescent works. On this issue, it should be recalled that the large fluorescent installations in Ottawa could not all be replicated in the Jewish Museum's limited spaces. Alloway concluded by speculating that Flavin's work was beginning to suffer from the limitations of his fluorescent medium. That, of course, would prove a huge underestimation of Flavin's ability to extract meaning from off-the-shelf fluorescent tubes.

In contrast to the mixed American reaction, the Canadian media, liberal and conservative, proved uniformly positive. Joan Lowndes of the *Vancouver Province* stressed Flavin's "articulation of space through light," and termed him "one of the most

¹⁷⁶ John Canaday, "Art: Jewish Museum Retrospective for Artist of 36," *New York Times*, 2 January 1970.

¹⁷⁷ Lawrence Alloway, "Art," *The Nation*, 9 February 1970, 155–6. This article is the source of the subsequent comments and quotes in this paragraph. It is reprinted in *It is What It Is: Writings on Dan Flavin since 1964*, 98–101.

original artists now on the American scene.”¹⁷⁸ Harry Malcolmson in *Saturday Night* termed the retrospective “superbly organized and presented,” and rated the catalogue “first class.”¹⁷⁹ Toronto gallery owner Jared Sable wrote the most informed Canadian review showing insight into Flavin’s art and putting it into a cultural context. His full-page, illustrated piece in *The Telegram*, an otherwise conservative Toronto daily, justly credited Smith with “the most exciting show which Canada will likely see for many years,” as well as for the significant purchases made under his guidance at the NGC.¹⁸⁰ Normand Thériault’s illustrated review in *La Presse* also showed considerable appreciation of Flavin’s use of colour while posing some probing questions to Smith about his choice of this artist.¹⁸¹ Barrie Hale in the *Star* hailed the art and the catalogue, describing the excitement at the crowded opening generated by the statements by Flavin and “the nearly mythical” Barnett Newman.¹⁸² Kay Kritzwiser’s review in the *Globe and Mail* reported on the frantic, last-minute work of the technicians, Smith’s enthusiasm, and Flavin’s wariness of critics.¹⁸³ As Smith observed looking back, Canadians tended to compare Flavin’s technique and use of colour with that of painters as they had no other

¹⁷⁸ Joan Lowndes, “Flavin’s Mystical Aura,” *Vancouver Province*, 17 November 1969, and reprinted in Feldman and Schubert, 64–65.

¹⁷⁹ Harry Malcolmson, “Art: Light and Shade Conveyed by a Fluorescent Tube are Aesthetic Enough in Character to Make for Powerful and Compelling Art,” *Saturday Night* (November 1969): 68, box 9, file 2 Dan Flavin – fluorescent light, etc., Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁸⁰ Jared Sable, “Flavin Makes Going to Ottawa Worthwhile,” *The Telegram*, 20 September, 1969, *ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Normand Thériault, “Arts Plastiques: Que la Lumière Soit!” *La Presse*, 4 October 1969, *ibid.*

¹⁸² Barrie Hale, “A Big Show Sights up the National Gallery,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 13 September 1969, *ibid.*

¹⁸³ Kay Kritzwiser, “Fluorescent Tubes: the Pigments on his Palette,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 September 1969, *ibid.*

valid point of reference.¹⁸⁴ Flavin may have appreciated the painterly comparisons. Boggs and Smith must have been greatly encouraged by the critical openness to a new form and style of art.

For most Canadian visitors, the installations had the greatest impact, approaching a sublime experience. Former NGC staff recalled visitors' excitement about this new form of art and their first immersive experience in coloured light.¹⁸⁵ Smith himself showed fascination with the unexpected shifts in relative colour perceptions when proceeding through the different installations. Pale orange would be replaced by red rose, with cool white light appearing pale rose.¹⁸⁶ For Smith, Flavin's art always built upon his sensuous use of colour.

Notably absent were any signs of protest about the attention devoted by the NGC to an American artist. Broad Canadian opposition to the Vietnam War might have made anything American a possible target: Flavin had encountered this problem in Germany. Gail Dexter, who endorsed Smith's avant-garde American acquisitions while at the *Toronto Daily Star*, argued around this time that American art represented imperialism and that Canadian art should define itself in opposition to production in New York.¹⁸⁷ On Flavin, however, the cultural nationalists, kept their powder dry.

At the time of the 1969 exhibition, the NGC acquired an outstanding early Flavin, *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* (1963–4). The NGC's version, one of an edition of

¹⁸⁴ Smith, "Recollections and Thoughts about Dan Flavin," 141.

¹⁸⁵ Monique Baker-Wishart, former NGC staff, email to the author of 22 January 2014. Interview with Dennis Reid on 18 January 2014.

¹⁸⁶ Brydon E. Smith, "Recollections and Thoughts about Dan Flavin," 139.

¹⁸⁷ Gail Dexter, "Yes, Cultural Imperialism Too!" in *Close the 49th Parallel etc.: The Americanization of Canada*, ed. Ian Lumsden (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 166. For similar views, but also accusing the NGC of "serving the imperialists by promoting U.S. styles..." see Barry Lord, *The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art* (Toronto: NC Press, 1974), 246.

three, is constructed of eight-foot (244 cm.) tubes in cool white fluorescent light.¹⁸⁸ Smith had enquired about the prices for Flavin's works as early as 1966 when the price was U.S. \$525, but had been unable to convince the AGO to acquire any work by the artist.¹⁸⁹ Jean Boggs approved the purchase of *the nominal three* in 1968 for \$4,000 without reference to trustees. The estimate included bringing the artist to Ottawa for the installation.¹⁹⁰ A discussion arose over whether the components would be sourced in New York or Ottawa. Flavin favoured Ottawa as long as the correct tubes could be procured locally.¹⁹¹ Ira Licht announced the planned acquisition in an article on Flavin in *artscanada*.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ A smaller, six-foot (183 cm.), posthumous version in the same tone exists in an edition of three. Flavin also created six and eight-foot versions in daylight fluorescent light. The NGC's version has the cachet of having been in the initial Green Gallery showing in 1964 as well as being authorized and constructed during Flavin's lifetime. See Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 229–21. Controversy now surrounds posthumous versions authorized by the Flavin estate and sold by the Zwirner Gallery. Original items from the Green Gallery sale now reportedly sell for \$1–2 million. See Nick Paumgarten, "Profiles: Dealer's Hand," *New Yorker*, 2 December 2013, 49–50 and Aston Cooper, "Posthumous Art on the Market," *Art + Auction* (September 2013): n.p.

¹⁸⁹ Brydon Smith to Jeannie Blake, Kornblee Gallery, 24 February 1966, box 9, file 1 Dan Flavin – fluorescent light, etc. (1961, 1966, 1969–72), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library-Archives.

¹⁹⁰ Memo from Brydon Smith and R.H. Hubbard to Jean Boggs, 26 August 1968, Curatorial File for *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* by Dan Flavin, NGC. The NGC made its final payment of \$2,500 U.S. to the Dwan Gallery in New York in February 1969.

¹⁹¹ See Brydon Smith to John Weber, Dwan Gallery, 29 October 1968, *ibid.*

¹⁹² Ira Licht, "Dan Flavin," *artscanada* XXV, no. 5 (December 1968): 62–4.



Dan Flavin, *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* (1963–4), tubes 244 cm. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.

In 2002 interviews, Smith recalled being attracted to this work's capacity to engage with architecture, its clarity and its simplicity.¹⁹³ This connection to the surrounding space required adjustments when the work was installed in different venues. In its initial Green Gallery configuration, the work assumed a compact appearance, grouped toward the middle of a wall. In 1969, Flavin adapted the work for Ottawa so that the outer tubes were flush with the edges of a twenty-four foot partition, one of which abutted a wall. Flavin and Smith later agreed on spacing for a configuration, centred on a wall as shown

¹⁹³ "Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002," Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives, and "Interview with Brydon Smith by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002," box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith interviewed by Kitty Scott, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

in the illustration, as the “correct appearance” for display in the NGC’s permanent collection, which is described in a curatorial document followed today.¹⁹⁴

The work’s dedication to William of Ockham stimulated Smith’s interest in the philosophy of nominalism. The dictum of Ockham’s razor requires that “no more entities be posited than are necessary.” For Michael Govan, this premise could be considered a Rosetta stone for Minimalism.¹⁹⁵ William of Ockham’s quarrels with the Papacy may have resonated with Flavin who experienced his own struggles with authority in a Catholic seminary. Unlike *Icon IV*, Flavin favoured explaining his title in this instance, citing a 1966 letter to Mel Bochner.¹⁹⁶

The work’s three units represent the minimum, basic sequence required to illustrate an infinite, mathematical progression. One of Flavin’s most iconic works, *the nominal three* elegantly illustrates how an art object in industrial material may evoke a complex concept. Smith’s justification for this acquisition stressed the importance of securing an early Flavin work when the window of opportunity was open. He predicted correctly that

¹⁹⁴ Francine Couture, “To Re-exhibit or to Produce the Original Work?” *Espace 71* (Spring 2005): 9.

¹⁹⁵ Michael Govan, *Dan Flavin*, “Exhibition brochure for DIA Center for the Arts, 26 May 1997–24 June 1998,” n.p. in box 28, file 3 Dan Flavin symposium 2001, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

¹⁹⁶ The relevant section of the catalogue entry reads:
 ... On this sheet, I enclose a lovely tempering aphorism which has been with me for a few years. ‘Entita non multiplicanda praeter necessitatem.’ ‘Principles (entities) should not be multiplied unnecessarily.’ Of course it is ‘Ockham’s razor.’ If I were you, I would feature it. Briefly, my Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia recognizes William of Ockham thusly...’d.c. 1349, English scholastic philosopher, a Franciscan. Embroiled in a general quarrel with Pope John XXII, he was imprisoned in Avignon but fled to the protection of Emperor Louis IV and supported him by attacking the temporal power of the papacy. Rejecting the doctrines of Thomas Aquinas he argued that reality exists solely in individual things and universals are merely abstract signs. This view led him to exclude questions such as the existence of God from intellectual knowledge, referring them to faith alone.’ ‘The nominal three’ is my tribute to William... See: *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, 205–6.

Flavin would continue to experiment with larger-scale installations, which might be acquired later.¹⁹⁷ Smith emphasized purchasing a cluster of representative works by an artist so that the NGC visitors would have a “fuller idea of what the artist’s work was about....” This policy, fully supported by Jean Boggs, placed a greater onus on the curator to make a judicious selection of artists and works with real staying power.

Between the time of the Ottawa exhibition and the Dia Foundation’s career retrospective of Flavin in 2004, the NGC version of *the nominal three* was exhibited in no fewer than 10 group exhibitions and cited in 33 publications.¹⁹⁸ Since 2004, it has continued to generate critical interest as a “manifesto piece.”¹⁹⁹ For Rainer Fuchs *the nominal three* creates tensions between emotions and the intellect, so that “any mystical speculation with the infinite is subjected to what amounts to mathematical transformation and clarification.”²⁰⁰ Other variations of the work in different scales and tones have generated their own extensive bibliographies and exhibition histories.

The final sentence of Smith’s catalogue entry on this work shows a true meeting of minds: “Besides illustrating Flavin’s statement that he can reiterate any part of his fluorescent light system, with elements or parts of that system simply altering in situation installation, *the nominal three* is a balanced confluence of the specific, the abstract and

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002, Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives. This is also the source for the information in the remainder of the paragraph.

¹⁹⁸ Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 220.

¹⁹⁹ See, for example, Alex Potts, “‘Dan Flavin: in...cool white’ and ‘inflected with black magic,’” in *Dan Flavin New Light*, ed. Jeffrey Weiss (Washington and New Haven: Yale University Press and National Gallery of Art, 2006), 18, 21, footnote 30.

²⁰⁰ Rainer Fuchs, “Dan Flavin and the Illusions of Minimal Art,” in *Dan Flavin Lights*, eds. Rainer Fuchs and Karola Kraus (Vienna: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, 2012), 14.

the phenomenal.”²⁰¹ Below this draft entry, Flavin wrote: “This last sentence is your best writing. I don’t agree about the categorical terms but I wouldn’t alter even a comma of it.”²⁰²

In addition to *icon IV (the pure land)* and *the nominal three*, the NGC also acquired at the time of the Ottawa exhibition the 1966 work *monument 4 for those killed in ambush (to P.K. who reminded me about death)*. This work’s red tubes in the form of a cross-bow and its title evoke the war then raging in Vietnam, which profoundly affected an entire generation. The “P.K.” in the dedication refers to Paul Katz, a painter and friend of Flavin, who did photography for the Guggenheim Museum.²⁰³ The Ottawa catalogue entry contained a number of quotes, initially submitted to the Primary Structures exhibition, but not previously published. Smith’s choice of this particular work illustrates his attraction to political themes. He believed that contemporary art should address issues of the day. We saw similar factors at play with Smith’s choice of Rosenquist’s *Painting for the American Negro*.

A short allusion to religion in the Ottawa catalogue version of Flavin’s autobiographical essay “... in daylight or cool white” has generated an ongoing debate. In the Ottawa text, Flavin asserted: “Somehow, at eighteen, I began to think about art – Roman Catholic diversions of it, of course.”²⁰⁴ The initially published version in *Artforum* in 1965 read simply: “At eighteen, I turned toward art.”²⁰⁵ The Dia Foundation

²⁰¹ Box 29 1/5, file 36 Incomplete catalogue information for *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, NGC fonds, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, 250.

²⁰⁴ Dan Flavin, “... in daylight or cool white,” *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, 12.

²⁰⁵ Dan Flavin, “... in daylight or cool white: an autobiographical sketch,” *Artforum IV*, no. 4 (December 1965): n.p., accessed 6 January 2014,

reprinted the Ottawa text in its 2004 catalogue, with minor adjustments based on a re-examination of the artist's manuscript. Recent scholarship has continued to address possible Christian content in Flavin's work.²⁰⁶

Smith remembered Flavin as gentle and approachable, though demanding when it came to his art.²⁰⁷ Some of Flavin's requests veered into the personal realm and would make many curators uncomfortable. Smith's written responses to Flavin adhere to professional issues suggesting that he was aware of the fine lines which curators cross at their peril. In reflecting on the issue of friendship between exhibition-makers and artists, Robert Storr has suggested that a professional disconnect be maintained for a project's integrity.²⁰⁸ Smith sought to maintain that space even as Flavin tested it.

Their close artist-curator relationship in 1969–70 evolved into a life-long friendship. The irregular post-1969 correspondence reveals ongoing trust and respect. While Smith did not actively collect Flavin works during the 1970s, he continued to respect his art. In addition to three pieces acquired at the time of the 1969 exhibition, the NGC later purchased *untitled (to Helene) 2* (1979) in 1982, the only room-sized installation in its collection.²⁰⁹ In 1994, Flavin donated *untitled (in honor of Leo at the 30th anniversary of*

<http://artforum.com/inprint/issue=196510&id=34032>. Flavin also republished this essay in later catalogues, making revisions as he went along.

²⁰⁶ Stefan Neuner, "Dan Flavin on the Path to an Ironic-Sublime," in *Dan Flavin Lights*, 39 and 57, note 34.

²⁰⁷ "Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002," Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives. This interview is also the source of other quotes in this paragraph, unless indicated otherwise.

²⁰⁸ Storr, "Show and Tell," 28.

²⁰⁹ The works reconstructed and purchased in 1969 were *icon IV (the pure land) (to David John Flavin [1933–1962])* (1962); *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* (1963); and *monument 4 for those killed in ambush (to P.K. who reminded me about death)* (1966).

his gallery), 1987. The NGC thus holds excellent examples of Flavin's production spanning most of his career.

After his retirement in 1999, Smith continued to be sought out for his Flavin expertise, including by Whitechapel Gallery in 1999 and the Deutsche Guggenheim in 2000.²¹⁰ He served as a panelist for symposia at the Chinati Foundation in 2000 and at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago in 2005.²¹¹ The 2004–5 Dia Foundation and National Gallery in Washington career retrospective accorded great respect for Smith's pioneering work. Flavin's regard for Smith and the importance of the 1969 exhibition, led the organizers to invite Smith to contribute one of the three catalogue essays.²¹² The Ottawa exhibition and its catalogue were cited in the other two essays as milestones in Flavin's career.²¹³ Only two of the icons and fluorescent works shown in Ottawa (not including the seven special installations) were not featured in the Washington retrospective. For Flavin scholars, Smith's legacy endures.

Flavin also played an important role in personal introductions to Judd, Newman, and Andre, advancing Smith's relations among a network of key American mediators. One contact led to another, illustrating Latour's definition of a network as a "string of actions," with mutual influence exercised through ongoing associations.²¹⁴ In a memorandum of 1973, Smith reported on a two-day trip to the Flavin show at the St.

²¹⁰ Brydon Smith, "an artificial barrier of blue, red and blue fluorescent light (to Flavin Starbuck Judd), 1968" in *Dan Flavin: The Architecture of Light*, ed. J. Fiona Ragheb, (Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim, 1999), 30–1.

²¹¹ "Agreement with MoCA Chicago of 18 August 2005," box 26, file 4 Dan Flavin – National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.) retrospective 2004 and miscellaneous, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²¹² Tiffany Bell, email to the author of 2 January 2014.

²¹³ See for example Michael Govan, "Irony and Light," 19, 21, 71–74, 76, 84 and Tiffany Bell, "Fluorescent Light as Art, 109, 119, 121 in *Dan Flavin: the Complete Lights 1961–96*.

²¹⁴ Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, 128.

Louis Art Museum where he encountered publisher and collector Joseph Pulitzer Jr. and viewed his private collection. He also met Heiner Friedrich and Helen Winkler (who would found the Dia Foundation a year later), and art dealers John Weber, Irving Blum, Richard Weil, and Leo Castelli.²¹⁵ This list suggests the kind of prestigious American art circles in which Smith now moved, acting as the NGC's ambassador. New York-based Canadian sculptor Robert Murray affirmed recently that Smith was the only NGC curator in his memory who ever achieved a high degree of recognition and credibility in American art milieus.²¹⁶

In the preface to the Flavin catalogue, Jean Boggs explained the NGC's decision to exhibit and collect international contemporary art in terms of avoiding a parochial perspective on Canadian art and acquiring future masterpieces while still affordable.²¹⁷ From that vantage, Flavin appears a bold and ultimately worthy choice. His art has become emblematic of Minimalism, a major and still influential art movement of the late-twentieth century. Overall, the generally respectful attention and quality of writing about the exhibition by Canadian and American critics validated Smith's efforts. Building upon the 1968 Rosenquist exhibition, the Flavin retrospective and catalogue reinforced the profile of the NGC as a player in North American contemporary art. Within Canada, the NGC also exercised leadership.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Brydon Smith to Jean Boggs, Dr. Hubbard and Curators, memorandum of 2 February 1973, box 57 Director's Office, file NG-D-1971 Smith, Travel & Trip Reports, Brydon Smith, NGC fonds, NGC Library-Archives.

²¹⁶ Robert Murray, interview with the author on 8 December 2013.

²¹⁷ Jean Boggs, "Preface," *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, 3.

²¹⁸ Although the VAG hosted the Flavin exhibition after Ottawa, it did not acquire any works by the artist until the donation in 1971 of *Untitled (to Donna) 1*. The AGO acquired *alternate diagonals of March 2, 1964 (for Don Judd)* in 1969 with funds from the Women's Committee. The MMFA and the Mendel Gallery do not own any Flavins.

As with Rosenquist, Smith's timing proved spot on. In 1969, Flavin was just making his major career breakthrough. Prior to Ottawa, he had commercial and university gallery exposure, but only one solo museum installation.²¹⁹ Flavin's NGC retrospective thus arrived at a critical point in his career. Flavin never forgot that this recognition came in Canada before the USA. Since his death in 1996, Flavin's art has generated sustained critical writing in the United States and Europe, along with ongoing museum and gallery interest.

Smith spoke at Flavin's funeral service in Cold Spring, N.Y., remembering his friend's most creative achievement as "a sensuous colourist or painter of space using coloured tubes of fluorescent light straight out of the carton."²²⁰ As he was leaving the service, Smith jotted down Carl Andre's poetic handwritten tribute: "Dan Flavin put mass into space and light into sculpture."²²¹ The last word belongs to NGC Director Shirley Thomson. In a personal note to Smith on Flavin's passing she wrote: "Your friendship with him was so strong and so pure. In return, Dan Flavin honoured you and through you the National Gallery. To this day, his presence here is truly luminous."²²²

Six years elapsed before Smith's next acclaimed exhibition in 1975 of an American artist, Donald Judd. In the interim, Smith remained active. Immediately after the Flavin show, he turned his attention to a Carl Andre exhibition, *Sculpture as Space*. Curated by the Guggenheim's Diane Waldman, the exhibition included 25 sculptures, ten word poems, and one opera. The NGC had planned to bring this exhibition to Ottawa at the end

²¹⁹ Dan Flavin: alternating pink and 'gold' at the MoCA of Chicago in 1967.

²²⁰ Brydon Smith, "Some Thoughts about Dan Flavin, the Man and his Art on the Occasion of his Memorial Service, 23 January 1997," box 26, file 2 Dan Flavin Memorial Service, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²²¹ Unsigned, handwritten note, *ibid*.

²²² Shirley Thomson to Brydon Smith, 1 December 1996, box 26, file 13 Dan Flavin – Obituary notes, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

of 1970 and then send it to the VAG. As plans advanced, the “October Crisis” broke out, leading the Canadian Government to impose the War Measures Act on October 16. In late November, the exhibition installed, Smith learned from an unknown Canadian source that Andre planned to read a Front de Libération du Québec (F.L.Q.) manifesto in place of his poetry at the opening ceremony.²²³ At this period many artists adopted militant political stances, but Andre had taken a step too far for the NGC at this sensitive juncture.

Smith phoned Andre on November 27. He expressed concern about both anti-American disruptions by F.L.Q. sympathizers as well as the negative impact on the NGC. He advised Andre that his poetry reading and even his entire show might be cancelled if his plans did not change. A postcard dated the following day from Andre to Smith indirectly confirms that Andre had not advised the NGC of his intention.²²⁴ Andre tried to end his card on a friendly note while he weighed his options: “A chill wind blows from the North. Be well and warm.” After reflection and facing what he believed amounted to censorship, Andre asked that the entire show be cancelled. Director Jean Boggs acted quickly to call off the exhibition.²²⁵ The VAG followed the NGC’s lead. A letter to Smith, dated 5 December 1970, recounts Flavin’s last-minute attempt to dissuade Andre following a chance meeting at the Dwan Gallery.²²⁶

²²³ The manifesto had been read on CBC and Radio Canada on October 8 as one of the F.L.Q. conditions for releasing kidnapped British diplomat James Cross. The F.L.Q. was subsequently outlawed in Canada on October 16.

²²⁴ Carl Andre to Brydon Smith, postcard dated 28 November 1970, box 40, file 2 Andre, Carl Exhibition, NGC Exhibition File for Carl Andre, NGC Library and Archives.

²²⁵ Kay Kritzwiser, “National Gallery Won’t Show Sculptor’s Work,” *Globe and Mail*, 7 December 1970, and “Wary Gallery,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 15 December 1970, box 8, file 5 Carl Andre – Exhibition (1968–70), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²²⁶ Dan Flavin to Brydon Smith, 5 December 1970, box 29/5, file 18 Flavin – Damaged icons, Exhibition Files for fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, NGC Library and Archives.

This incident did not diminish Smith's admiration of Andre's art nor, once the dust had settled, prevent him from exhibiting and acquiring his works. The NGC had already secured *Lever* (1966) and *144 Copper Square* (1969) before the special exhibition was cancelled. In 1978 it acquired *Pile* (1977), and in 1985 *Caiman* (1982). In 1979, Smith co-curated with Jessica Bradley an exhibition of Andre's works titled *Cuts*. According to Diana Nemiroff, Smith had to be dissuaded from proposing an additional acquisition based in part on concern about Andre's financial situation during a period when he was shunned by many museums in the wake of the suspicious death of his wife, Ana Mendieta, in 1985. The loyalty was two-way. As a tribute to Smith's career, Andre tried, unsuccessfully, to donate a work to the NGC on Smith's retirement in 1999.²²⁷ Smith's determination to continue collecting and showing Andre's work, notwithstanding the embarrassment and expense the artist had caused in 1970, illustrates both his steady, long-term focus and his total commitment to an avant-garde artist in whom he believed.

In addition to shaping public tastes by his choices of American artists, Smith also exercised a direct influence on Canadian art. He collaborated with curator Pierre Théberge on the travelling exhibition *Boucherville*, Montréal, Toronto, London 1973. The curators focussed on six artists deemed worthy of greater recognition, but who had not yet achieved wide attention, including painters Jean-Marie Delavalle, Ron Martin and James Spencer, and sculptors Robin Collyer, Murray Favro and Henry Saxe. All but Spencer have gone on to successful careers in a variety of media. This form of exhibition, encouraged by Boggs, replaced the biennials of Canadian art begun in 1955. This

²²⁷ Email to the author from David Monkhouse, former NGC Curatorial Assistant, 15 December 2013. The donation fell through over complications in acquiring the kind of kiln-dried timbers in the dimension that Andre wanted.

approach reflected Smith's own preference to zone in on a few artists and to exhibit a range of their production.

Smith also engaged with Canadian artists while curating the national pavilion at the Venice biennale: Ulysse Comtois and Guido Molinari in 1968, Michael Snow in 1970, and Gershon Iskowitz and Walter Redinger in 1972. He curated an exhibition of sculptor Robert Murray for the São Paulo Biennial in 1969.²²⁸ The two would remain on friendly terms; the New York-based Murray, already a friend of Newman, serving as a further bridge to American artists, curators and collectors.²²⁹ Michael Snow recalled in a recent interview Smith's "intensity" in following particular artists and listening to them. He also confirmed Smith's close involvement in the American art scene at this period.²³⁰

American artist Donald Judd would command most of Smith's curatorial attention for the next five years. When the NGC decided in 1973 to hold a Judd retrospective, the artist had *inter alia* already benefitted from solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum (1968), the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven (1970), the Kunstverein Hannover (1970), the Whitechapel Art Gallery (1970), and the Pasadena Museum (1971). At the time of the latter exhibition, *Time* magazine declared him "the most influential sculptor of his generation."²³¹ Judd had also written an influential body of criticism in which he had theorized new forms of three-dimensional abstract art, neither painting nor sculpture,

²²⁸ Brydon Smith, *Robert Murray* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1969). The catalogue essay was also published as "Robert Murray," *artscanada* XXVI, no. 136/137 (October 1969): 30–34.

²²⁹ Robert Murray, interview with the author on 8 December 2013.

²³⁰ Michael Snow, interview with the author on 27 January 2014.

²³¹ Robert Hughes, "Exquisite Minimalist," *Time*, 24 May 1971, 48–51 in Donald Judd Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives.

making use of industrial materials while avoiding fragmentation, imagery or illusion.²³²

In his own practice, the artist often explored the impact of colour on the same, repeated form. His untitled sculptures displayed clean lines and economically compact structures with no sign of the artist's gesture or external references. Although Judd wanted his work to be widely accessible, it nevertheless presented challenges for a general viewing public unused to his new sculptural vocabulary. By the early 1970s, Judd had reached the stage in his career where he could be selective in his institutional partners. For the NGC, the investment in a major Judd retrospective and catalogue raisonné could be justified by his international stature.

Smith first viewed works by Judd at the Isaacs Gallery in Toronto in March 1965. He found the four examples "too simple for words."²³³ As with his first encounter with Flavin's work, he knew immediately that he was seeing something different and was attracted by the clean lines and strong colour. However, Smith's real *coup de coeur* seems to have occurred at the Whitney Museum in 1968 where he viewed one of the progressions in aluminum: "...it was love at first sight, and I couldn't take my eyes off it. A lot of things became interesting all at once, and everything about it felt right. It was simple and open, yet complex. The longer I looked, the more interesting it became...."²³⁴

²³² Donald Judd, "Specific Objects," in *Donald Judd: Complete Writings 1959–75* (Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975), 181–89. The article, written in 1964, was originally published in *Arts Yearbook 8* (1965).

²³³ Brydon Smith, "Some Memories and Thoughts about Donald Judd the Man and his Art on the Occasion of his Memorial Service, 12 May 1994," box 9, file 1 Donald Judd – Articles, obituary, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives. According to the pencilled notation on the Isaacs Gallery price list, the four works were those subsequently designated *DSS37*, *DSS50*, *DSS53* and *DSS57*. See Polychrome Construction, box 26, file 4 Dan Flavin Works of Art, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²³⁴ *Ibid.* Progressions were horizontal works, attached to the wall, which alternated variable spaces and forms based on mathematical sequences.

Smith met Judd in 1968 in New York while organizing the Dan Flavin exhibition and again in 1969 in Ottawa at the exhibition's opening. Judd impressed many of his generation with his formidable intellect. Smith remembered conversations with the artist about how his works defined space for the viewer, and noted their common background in science.²³⁵ Both men possessed a keen interest in the science and aesthetics behind new forms of art. Further along in their collaboration, Judd's political activism revealed other shared values and interests. Over time, the two developed a strong intellectual connection.

Smith began detailed exhibition planning with Judd in April 1973 in New York where they discussed layouts, possible purchases and reconstructions of wooden sculptures.²³⁶ Artist and curator decided early on to incorporate material being collected for a catalogue raisonné in the exhibition catalogue.²³⁷ Smith initially planned the exhibition for 1974, but completing the catalogue raisonné required an additional year. Unfortunately, at least for art historians, Judd and Smith communicated for the most part orally rather than in writing. The few archived letters from this period, mainly from Smith, tend to address practical matters.

No attempt appears to have been made to take the exhibition beyond Ottawa. This may have reflected Judd's preference. Several of the Ottawa rooms contained site-specific works. Re-installing the exhibition would have required extensive input from the

²³⁵ "Interview with Brydon Smith by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002," box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith Interviewed by Kitty Scott, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²³⁶ Brydon Smith to Donald Judd, 19 April 1983, box 3/3, file 91.17 Judd, Don, Don Judd Exhibition, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²³⁷ Brydon Smith, "Foreword," *Donald Judd: A Catalogue of the Exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 24 May–6 July 1975* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada for the National Museums of Canada, 1975), xv. This publication will be referred to as *DSS* in subsequent references.

artist while he was increasingly engaged with permanent displays of his and a few other artists' work at his property in Marfa, Texas.

In April 1974 Judd forwarded to Smith 94 sheets of drawings and notations along with seven sketchbooks for his consideration.²³⁸ Smith selected drawings for the exhibition, but did not add them to the catalogue raisonné, which included only sculptures and the carved woodblocks. His aim was to “show the development of certain forms...and to indicate the great number of works...that have never been made because of lack of money for materials and construction.”²³⁹ The final exhibition contained fifty-one works, the largest number Judd had exhibited outside the U.S.A. at that point.

Judd attached great importance to the display of his art, believing that even slight variations in the placement of objects affected a viewer's perception. In a 1982 essay on installation, the artist noted that the NGC “occupies part of an office building and so has fairly plain, decent space.”²⁴⁰ He added that one room at his property in Marfa, carefully planned for over a year, became the basis for a room in his 1975 exhibition at the NGC. The artist may have had in mind the NGC's fourth-floor space with the cadmium-red objects. Replicating the Marfa layout in a neutral area of the Lorne Building allowed him to show his ideal permanent configuration and avoid devoting time and effort for a less satisfactory, temporary arrangement. Judd found most museums ill-adapted to his art. Their often grand architectural spaces competed with his plain aesthetics. After Ottawa,

²³⁸ “Inventory of Drawings, etc. by Don Judd...” (7 pages), box 3/3, file 91.17 Judd, Don, Don Judd Exhibition, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²³⁹ Brydon Smith, “Guide and Check List to the Exhibition Donald Judd,” box 9, file 6 Donald Judd exhibition and lecture 1975, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁴⁰ Donald Judd, “The Importance of Permanence,” in *Minimalism*, ed. James Meyer (London: Phaidon, 2000), 268. Originally published in *Journal: A Contemporary Art Magazine* (Spring 1982): 18–21.

he would focus increasingly on Marfa where he could create permanent installations, displaying groups of his works in conformity with his original intentions. The foregoing reference to the NGC amounted to a rare, favourable remark about any museum space.

The exhibition was divided between the main and fourth floors of the Lorne Building. Upon entering, visitors would view a front room facing Elgin Street which held two copper-sided boxes along with a special installation on the four walls, designed for Ottawa, in which Judd cantilevered ten stainless steel boxes with light cadmium-red inside back surfaces. A large, high-ceilinged room facing Albert Street accommodated three of the vertical stacks.²⁴¹ Another ground floor room facing Slater Street displayed a horizontal emphasis with three progressions.²⁴² The low-ceilinged fourth floor was divided into six spaces for paintings and objects and two areas for works on paper and documentary photographs. In the two-storied fourth-floor well area, Smith and Judd installed six square, open-ended plywood boxes confronting an equal number of open parallelogram-based boxes with unequal angles, purchased by the NGC in 1973.²⁴³

The layouts and choice of objects presented visitors with representative examples of Judd's formal experiments in a range of materials and colours, demonstrating his evolution from painting to three-dimensional objects. Unlike traditional retrospectives, items were grouped by formal characteristics rather than presented chronologically. Judd may have insisted that his non-referential art stand on its own visually, without comment

²⁴¹ The stacks displayed vertically arranged boxes of equal size, projecting from the wall and equidistant. Spacing between the boxes was determined by the distance between floor and ceiling.

²⁴² Progressions were horizontal works, attached to the wall, which alternated variable spaces and forms based on mathematical sequences.

²⁴³ Brydon Smith, "Guide and Check List to the Exhibition Donald Judd," box 9, file 6 Donald Judd exhibition and lecture 1975, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives. This document is also the source of the layout information in this paragraph.

such as explanatory wall labels. The exhibition guide and checklist, printed on the same yellow paper as many of Judd's drawings, represented a bare-bones introduction, leaving interpretations open-ended.

Judd and Smith shared a belief in the need for prolonged looking at art objects. They also believed in paying great attention to placement and relations between objects.²⁴⁴

Judd worked intuitively by trial and error. He favoured long-term installations of groups of objects, a belief which dovetailed with Smith's acquisition and display practices.

Former colleagues of Smith cite his mastery of the art of installation and his ability to perceive relationships between different works as his forte.²⁴⁵ The Ottawa layout's careful groupings of related objects based on form and materials proved an effective way to display Judd's artistic development. Working with Judd enriched Smith's understanding of installation.

Judd had initiated the catalogue raisonné project in 1969. The record of the artist's production which his office manager Dudley Del Balso, hired in April 1968, began keeping formed the basis of the eventual NGC publication. Roberta Smith would join Del Balso from 1972–4. They had catalogued about 150 items before Smith and the NGC took over the project in 1974. Up to that time, the NGC had never published a catalogue raisonné.

The designer contracted for the catalogue, Eiko Emori, again developed creative concepts as she had with the Flavin publication. The cover in Judd's signature light cadmium-red evoked his 1963–4 Green Gallery solo exhibition of three-dimensional

²⁴⁴ Nicolas Serota, "Donald Judd: A Sense of Place," in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicolas Serota (London: Tate Publishing, 2004), 106.

²⁴⁵ David Monkhouse, former NGC Curatorial Assistant, email to the author, 15 December 2013; Dr. Andrew Lugg interview with the author 19 February 2014; interview in 2013 with Michael Pantazzi, former NGC Curator of European Art.

objects. The thickness and weight of the volume gave it a sculptural quality. Smith complimented the publication team for a plan which, in his view, was “sympathetic to the contents.”²⁴⁶ At his request, the final layout allowed generous white spaces between texts and illustrations, reflecting the way Judd liked his works displayed.

Looking back, Smith considered his monumental 320-page publication in terms of taking advantage of the exhibition to inventory Judd’s works in a way that would be useful for museums and collectors.²⁴⁷ When asked about the rarity of such a venture by the NGC, Smith acknowledged that there had been a particular moment when it was possible to make a real contribution with very good exhibition catalogues. He allowed that rising costs were “possibly excessive” in one sense, but justifiable in others.

The number of works catalogued provides an idea of the ambition of the undertaking: 355 untitled objects from 1960–75 to be dated, measured, described and photographed. Some eighty-two works came from Judd himself, eighteen from the Castelli Gallery, and twenty-two from the dealer and collector Heiner Friedrich in Cologne, making a cluster of 122 works. Castelli kept excellent records from the time the artist joined his gallery in July 1965. Other owners’ records often required further verification. Smith travelled to Marfa as part of the exhibition planning and catalogue research. He also paid several visits to the Bernstein Brothers custom metal workshop in Long Island City to check their

²⁴⁶ Brydon Smith memorandum to Eiko Emori, Peter Smith and Julia Findley, 11 February 1975, box 1/3, file 1 Donald Judd Exh. – Sept. – Oct. 1974, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁴⁷ “Interview with Brydon Smith by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002,” box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith Interviewed by Kitty Scott, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and archives. This is also the source of other information in this paragraph.

job sheets. Smith considered this source “most important.”²⁴⁸ Smith and his small team, comprising Maija Vilcins and Monique Baker, tracked down bibliographic references and verified information with 186 private owners, 35 museums and 20 private galleries.²⁴⁹ They double-checked each work’s exhibition history. According to American scholar James Meyer, the catalogue’s 30-page chronology of Judd’s exhibitions remains the “best documentation of the provincial reception of minimalist work in the United States during the seventies.”²⁵⁰ Monique Baker recalled the great attention to detail and respect for the artist’s exacting requirements, including avoidance of such descriptive titles as “stack” or “bleacher.”²⁵¹

The NGC gave full credit to Dudley Del Balso’s and Roberta Smith’s preliminary work. Taking up the NGC’s numbering, many art historians now refer to Judd’s works by the Ottawa system, beginning with the letters “DSS,” the initials of the surnames of the three main contributors: Del Balso, Smith and Smith, a testimony to the authority of their research. *DSS* also serves as a short form reference to the catalogue itself. This labour-intensive experience in 1974–5 did not deter Smith from agreeing after his retirement to help with a Judd Foundation project to extend the catalogue raisonné to cover production from 1975–94. This multi-year project remains a work in progress. What Smith and his

²⁴⁸ Brydon Smith to Ed and Marty Bernstein, 3 May 1974, box 3/3, file 87 – 13 Judd – Catalogue information received, Donald Judd Exhibition Files, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives, and Smith, *DSS*, 92.

²⁴⁹ Smith, *DSS*, 315–19.

²⁵⁰ James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 306, footnote 40.

²⁵¹ Monique Baker-Wishart, former NGC Curatorial Assistant, email to the author 22 January 2014. Judd had an aversion to titles of all kinds, even descriptive ones, which he believed could suggest references never intended by the artist, or which would come between the viewer and the art object.

small team accomplished should be recognized as a major achievement, providing a solid foundation for later endeavours.

With Judd's concurrence, Smith invited Roberta Smith, now the *New York Times'* senior art critic, to write the main catalogue essay. At that time, she had published reviews for *Artforum* and *The Village Voice*, but was still at the beginning of her career. She had gotten to know Judd during the Independent Study Program at the Whitney in the autumn of 1968. Her essay for the Ottawa catalogue drew upon university research, submitted in 1969 to Professor Richard Cervene, Chair of the Department of Art at Grinnell College in Iowa. Her early research remains even today remarkably insightful and mature. After reviewing it, Brydon Smith made only a few suggestions for redrafting while leaving the author considerable leeway: "Roberta – ... Take my comments as suggestions. Feel free to disregard them in the interest of keeping integrity of original writing. Make any changes, deletions and additions you think necessary."²⁵² R. Smith described her correspondence with Brydon Smith as "therapeutic," revealing some hesitations about her draft and seeking the curator's advice.²⁵³ In an undated letter to Smith, she summarized her deepest thoughts on Judd's art:

Its content is the exhilaration of experience and this exhilaration is a kind of illusion, because Judd's work is asserting only what he thinks can be known, as firmly and repeatedly as he has done, (it) makes us think, like all art in that tradition does, that we can see, and know, that things are clear and ordered... We end up knowing that life is not like a Judd.²⁵⁴

²⁵² Roberta Smith, "A Critical Analysis of the Development of Donald Judd," 29 May 1969, 1, box 1/3, file 11, Donald Judd exhibition files, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁵³ Roberta Smith to Brydon Smith, undated letter, box 1/3, file 11 R. Smith/D. Del Balso – Don Judd Exhibition, Donald Judd exhibition files, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

Judd's and Smith's confidence in this young writer proved eminently well placed.

Roberta Smith's twenty-seven-page essay described Judd's artistic journey, showing that the three-dimensional works followed years of painting, education, critical writing and artistic experimentation.²⁵⁵ Smith devoted two-thirds of her essay to the period before the 1963–4 solo exhibition at the Green Gallery. She then examined Judd's shift to metal, Plexiglas and other new materials. She noted the risks that Judd took to respect the autonomy of his materials, their form and colours. She concluded that Judd was doing his best work ever in 1975. Given the amount of thought and work that had clearly gone into the essay and its quality, the NGC increased her fee.²⁵⁶

Roberta Smith submitted a critical text worthy of a major exhibition and accompanying catalogue raisonné. Her essay added perspective, critical thinking, and essential information about the artist. It presented Judd's work in its own terms. Like the catalogue itself, her essay remains an essential reference for the first half of Judd's career.²⁵⁷ R. Smith continued to comment on Judd's work after joining the *New York Times* in 1986. As she gained prominence, she remained a valuable connection or, as Latour might designate her, a mediator to American art circles for Smith and the NGC.

In the course of planning the catalogue, Brydon Smith had considered including some of Judd's own writings. When he learned that Kasper Koenig of the Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) had decided independently to republish all of

²⁵⁵ Roberta Smith, "Donald Judd," *DSS*, 3–31. This essay is the source of the information in this paragraph.

²⁵⁶ From \$400 to \$1,000. See Brydon Smith to Roberta Smith, 9 January 1975, box 1/3, file 11 R. Smith/D. Del Balso – Don Judd Exhibition, Donald Judd exhibition files, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁵⁷ For judgements along these lines see James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties*, 276–77, footnote 21, and Thomas Kellein, *Donald Judd: The Early Work, 1955–68* (Bielefeld: Kunsthalle, 2002), 13.

Judd's early texts, he happily deferred to that project. With a similar format and complementary yellow cover, NSCAD's initiative synergized with the NGC catalogue. The NSCAD publication confirmed Judd's prominence as a critic of new American art, helping to describe and define the direction and intentions of many contemporary artists as well as his own.

Smith's own brief "Foreword" to the catalogue described his early contacts with Judd's work.²⁵⁸ He underlined that his observations about Judd had emerged over time and stressed the importance of form, proportion and materials. More might have been expected of Smith as curator than this two-page text (in addition to the laconic guide and checklist noted above). This would be the third major exhibition catalogue for which he provided no substantive essay. At least one Canadian reviewer regretted the absence of more curatorial comment in the catalogue and guide.²⁵⁹

The National Museums Corporation, the NGC's legally mandated oversight body, promoted the catalogue energetically as a major publishing initiative for 1975.²⁶⁰ The following year, NGC staff provided an accounting to the Visiting Committee. The budget for the catalogue and exhibition totalled \$78,968.68. The \$30,556 spent on the catalogue slightly exceeded its \$30,000 budget.²⁶¹ The exhibition budget had to be topped up with \$5,886 from the Purchase Account. The NGC staff noted international interest in the

²⁵⁸ Smith, "Foreword," *DSS*, xiii-xiv. This is also the source of information in this paragraph.

²⁵⁹ Claude Gosselin, "Donald Judd," *Vie des Arts* XX, no. 80 (Autumn 1975): 72 in Doc/NG EX Clippings File 1530, Donald Judd 25 May–6 July 1975, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁶⁰ Paul Shanley to Guy Valiquet, memorandum of 25 April 1975, box 1/3, file 1 Donald Judd Exh. – Sept. – Oct. 1974, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁶¹ "Revision of the Cost of Past Exhibition," Minutes of the Visiting Committee for the National Gallery of Canada, 19 May 1976, 868–70, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives. The additional information in this paragraph comes from the same source.

catalogue. In a defensive mood, they pointed out that “subsidizing bilingualism” had doubled printing costs. At the time of the report, the NGC had recovered \$16,340 from catalogue sales, with 916 copies sold in softcover at \$15, but only 130 in hardcover at \$20. (The NGC had printed 1,000 copies of each.) The above accounting and backlog of unsold hardcover copies suggest that Smith’s project had raised questions. Over time, however, the catalogues have become valuable collectors’ items. A hardcover version in pristine condition was recently offered online for \$6,000.²⁶²

At Judd’s request, local Scottish pipers provided *pibroch* Gaelic music at the 23 May 1975 opening to add a sense of occasion. The artist’s friend, Dan Flavin, was invited to speak. His highly personal statement criticized American politicians, critics, and artists such as Anthony Caro, but effectively registered Judd’s distance from European sculptural theories and practices, his emphasis on colour, and his rejection of generalized labels such as “minimal.”²⁶³ A former NGC staff member recalled that Judd, though normally shy at openings, seemed to enjoy himself and the shared sense of celebration among Americans and Canadians.²⁶⁴

The NGC’s major project attracted international attention. John Russell in the *New York Times* expressed overall pleasure with the exhibition. He particularly welcomed the placement of Judd’s objects near a group of paintings by artists he appreciated, as well as

²⁶² See: <http://www.amazon.com/Donald-Judd-catalogue-exhibition-paintings/dp/0888842775>, accessed on 9 March 2014.

²⁶³ Box 9, file 1 Dan Flavin – fluorescent light, etc. Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives. Flavin’s statement was reprinted in “Canada,” *Studio International* (September-October 1975): 156.

²⁶⁴ Email to the author from Monique Baker-Wishart, 22 January 2014.

their proximity to historic masterpieces.²⁶⁵ In an interesting bounce-back effect, several Canadian regional media reprinted a summary of Russell's review.²⁶⁶ Three European art periodicals published short notices.²⁶⁷

More important for the exhibition's international coverage were the cover photograph and feature article by William Agee, Judd's Whitney curator, in the May-June 1975 issue of *Art in America*. Written in advance of the Ottawa opening, the article provided a sympathetic overview of Judd's career, underlining the artist's significance to contemporary art.²⁶⁸ Timed to coincide with the Ottawa exhibition, Agee's generously illustrated article no doubt stimulated American interest.

The NGC's initial announcement of the exhibition attracted media attention across Canada. Several outlets anticipated that the latest in advanced, contemporary art might generate controversy, quoting Smith to the effect that Judd was creating a new artistic vocabulary.²⁶⁹ After the opening, the Ottawa press published full-page reviews which expressed openness to Judd's art.²⁷⁰ Gilles Toupin in *La Presse* summarized Judd's concepts and concluded that the NGC exhibition amounted to "un grand moment dans la

²⁶⁵ John Russell, "In Ottawa, a 'Sandwich of New and Old Art'," *New York Times*, 24 June 1975 in Doc/NG EX Clippings File 1530, Donald Judd 25 May–6 July 1975, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁶⁶ See, for example, the *Vancouver Province*, 26 June 1975; and the Saskatoon *Star Phoenix* of 27 June 1975 in Doc/NG EX Clippings File 1530, Donald Judd 25 May–6 July 1975, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁶⁷ See *Périodique Trimestrielle* 12 Anno III (May 1976) n.p. Dominique Keller, "Katalogue, Werkeverzeichnisse: Donald Judd," *Du* (August 1975): n.p., and *Domus* (Milan), n.p., *ibid.*

²⁶⁸ William C. Agee, "Unit, Series, Site: A Judd Lexicon," *Art in America* (May–June 1975): 40–49, *ibid.*

²⁶⁹ See, for example, James Nelson, "Plywood Becomes Art Form," *Vancouver Province*, 22 May 1975, and "Art show controversy anticipated," *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 16 May 1975, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁷⁰ Kit Irving, "Parcels in Space," *Ottawa Journal*, 24 May 1975, and Kathleen Walker, "The Personal Statements of Donald Judd," *Ottawa Citizen*, 24 May 1975, in Doc/NG EX Clippings File 1530, Donald Judd 25 May–6 July 1975, NGC Library and Archives.

vie culturelle de l'Amérique."²⁷¹ *Design Canada* hailed the catalogue's brilliant "reflection of the nature of the artist" giving it an "honourable mention" award.²⁷²

Writing in *artscanada*, David Burnett pointed to the significance of Judd's art and the excellence of Smith's presentation: "Placement, lighting, calculation of spaces were made with a consummate sense of rightness for the individual pieces and for reading relationships."²⁷³ Burnett defended Judd's art against the charges laid by Michael Fried in his 1967 *Artforum* article "Art and Objecthood," noting that Fried had not appreciated that "objecthood" for Judd was just the beginning not the end goal of his art.²⁷⁴ This article provided a useful critical discussion which, as will be noted below, had not found a place in the catalogue itself.

An unsigned review in the *Montreal Star* acknowledged the importance of the Ottawa exhibition, but seemed to side with Fried deeming Judd's art: "invigorating theatre, but purely sensory, without plot."²⁷⁵ The Toronto media, surprisingly, do not appear to have reviewed the exhibition.

Smith's international contacts, however, reacted with enthusiasm. Ellen Johnson at Oberlin College, which later hired Judd, praised the catalogue: "What a superb piece of work! Now I see what my friend Richard Morphet meant by saying it is itself a primary

²⁷¹ Gilles Toupin, "Les objets autonomes de Donald Judd," *La Presse*, 31 May 1975, *ibid.*

²⁷² Peter Smith to Brydon Smith, memorandum of 4 October 1976, and "Donald Judd," *Design Canada – The Look of Books 1976* 17, in box 1/3, file 6 Donald Judd Exh. Sept.–Oct. 1974, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁷³ David Burnett, "Donald Judd: The National Gallery of Canada," *artscanada* XXXII, no. 203/203 (Winter 1975–76): 32, in Doc/NG EX Clippings File 1530, Donald Judd 25 May–6 July 1975, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 31.

²⁷⁵ "Brydon Smith, *Donald Judd*, The National Gallery of Canada," *Montreal Star*, 19 July 1975 in Doc/NG EX Clippings File 1530, Donald Judd 25 May–6 July 1975, NGC Library and Archives.

structure.”²⁷⁶ Judd’s parents told Smith that they had no idea the catalogue was to assume such proportions and found it “excellent in every respect.”²⁷⁷ Ronald Alley, Keeper of the Modern Collection at the Tate wrote: “May I congratulate you and your collaborators on a splendid piece of research.”²⁷⁸

Since the exhibition, the catalogue has, as planned, become an essential tool for researchers. Diana Nemiroff described the exhibition and catalogue as “models of thoroughness and comprehensiveness, distinguished in both instances by a design that reflected a deep understanding of the art.”²⁷⁹ She added: “As an historical document of Judd’s artistic development and philosophy, the catalogue supported his own understanding of his place in the recent history of American art.”²⁸⁰

The publication has also inspired Canadian artists. In 1994 Rodney Graham produced *Donald Judd Catalogue Raisonné, the National Gallery of Canada*, a sculpture consisting of a copy of the Judd catalogue in an anodized aluminum case projecting from the wall. In 2004, Toronto-based artist Derek Sullivan created a model of the Ottawa catalogue with a hand-drawn cover but filled with blank sheets. His gesture paid homage to the catalogue as an art object.²⁸¹ He also implied that few artists could afford the now expensive, highly collectible original while many owners would not bother to open their copies.

²⁷⁶ Ellen Johnson to Brydon Smith, 21 August 1975, box 3/3, file 87/13 Judd Catalogue information received, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁷⁷ Effie and Roy Judd to Brydon Smith, 4 September 1975, *ibid.*

²⁷⁸ Ronald Alley to Brydon Smith, 21 September 1975, *ibid.*

²⁷⁹ Diana Nemiroff, *3 X 3: Flavin, Andre, Judd* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2003), paragraph 27.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁸¹ Peter Trépanier, *Leiber and Sullivan* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2012). Exhibition brochure.

By the 1970s many early works by Judd were unavailable for loan or had been destroyed. The Ottawa exhibition provided an occasion to repair or reconstruct some of them, and for the NGC to select key early works for acquisition. Under the agreement with Judd, the artist would own any rebuilt works, other than those purchased by the NGC.²⁸² By the time of the 1975 exhibition, the NGC held five Judd works, the same number as MoMA. No other museums had such extensive holdings.

The NGC took advantage of this exceptional opportunity to purchase three light cadmium-red floor pieces that had been included in Judd's 1963–1964 Green Gallery show, his first solo exhibition of three-dimensional objects.²⁸³ This show led directly to the important theoretical text, "Specific Objects," quoted earlier. In this much-cited article, Judd explained his and other artists' move away from painting toward new forms of three-dimensional art.

One of the red floor pieces acquired by the NGC, *untitled* (1963) in light cadmium-red oil on wood with metal lathe, now also known as *DSS36*, had been spotted by Smith as early as 1965 at an Isaacs Gallery exhibition in Toronto titled *Polychrome Construction*.²⁸⁴ By the time he arrived at the NGC in 1967, many of these and other early Judd works were no longer available. Late in his career, Smith recalled that his interest in Judd had been longstanding, waiting for a suitable opportunity for NGC

²⁸² Brydon Smith to Marianne Stockebrand, 24 November 1998, box 29, file 3 Judd Foundation Advisory Committee, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁸³ The acquisitions that had been included in the Green Gallery show were later assigned the references *DSS35* (1963), reconstructed in 1975; *DSS36* (1963), top element from 1963 and lower element reconstructed in 1975; and *DSS41* (1963), reconstructed in 1966.

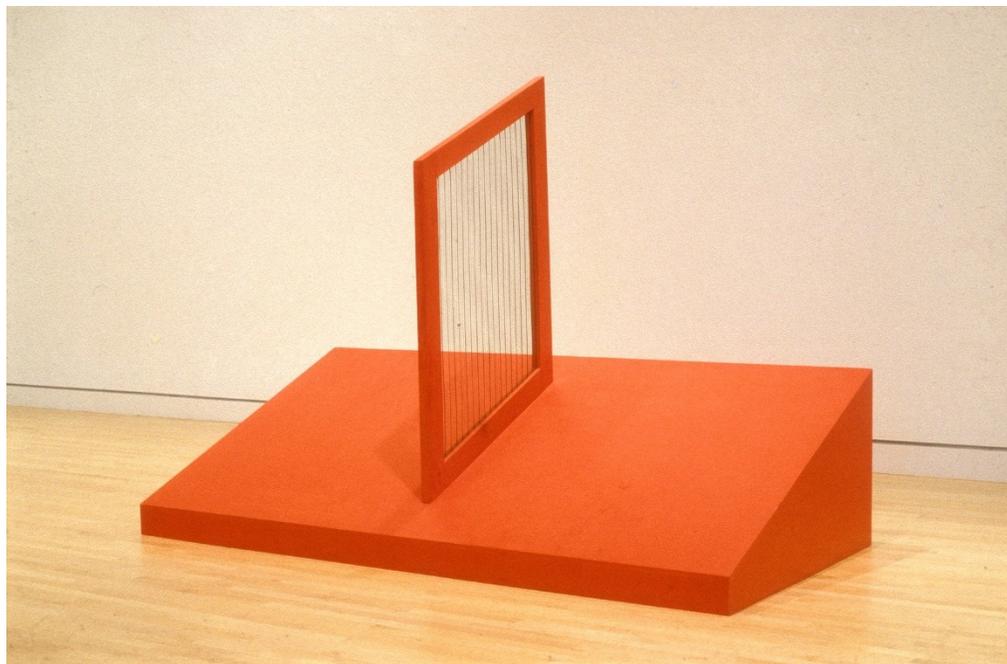
²⁸⁴ At that time the work was identified as *Untitled I*, dated 1963, and was offered at \$1,100. See: "Isaacs Gallery price list and sketches," box 26, file 4 Dan Flavin National Gallery of Art (Washington D.C.) retrospective 2004 and miscellaneous, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

acquisitions.²⁸⁵ When questioned about his choices among Judd's works, Smith declared that he was not aiming for the iconic but rather the strongest. He clarified that he wanted works which were not extreme but radical: "... you want the typical work but you also want the work which is not typical either..."²⁸⁶ In another interview, Smith emphasized the need to show the development of an artist's career or "turning points," and getting "very fine, very resolved, very beautiful examples of the artists where some of the...ideas are fully resolved and presented."²⁸⁷ Within these parameters, and as seen with the Pollock purchase, Smith could maintain a long-term vigilance preparing to act quickly when acquisition opportunities arose. Nonetheless, his decision to begin acquiring Judd works for the NGC only in 1973 represents an unusual delay given that interesting works at reasonable prices had been available much earlier.

²⁸⁵ "Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002," Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ "Interview with Brydon Smith by Kitty Scott, 3 November 2002," box 22, file 3 Brydon Smith Interviewed by Kitty Scott, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.



Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1963; reconstructed 1975), metal lathe and wood with light cadmium-red oil paint, 183 x 264.2 x 124.5 cm. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.

Judd's original intention in 1963–4 had been to construct two similar works incorporating different brass lathes, one framed in red and black and the second in a monochrome red. In a note about *DSS36* following discussions with Judd, Smith wrote that the NGC "...will construct (a) base for the harp piece."²⁸⁸ The brass lathe (harp) in the red frame used in *DSS36* came from the artist's Spring Street studio and required refurbishing.²⁸⁹ The NGC's work thus represents a hybrid of 1963 and 1975 components with an original harp and a newly constructed lower element. The lathe used in the Green

²⁸⁸ Brydon Smith, "Discussions with Judd," 11 December 1973, box 3/3, file 91.17 Judd, Don, Don Judd Exhibition, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives. The final price was \$7,725 (Canadian). See Curatorial file for No. 18476, National Gallery of Canada.

²⁸⁹ Brydon Smith to Donald Judd, 19 February 1974, box 3/3, file 91.17 Judd, Don, Don Judd Exhibition, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives. An estimated 39 hours of work was required for the base.

Gallery version, now known as *DSS37*, incorporated a frame in black and red, which Judd considered a “monochrome.”²⁹⁰ In that spirit and given their use of similar forms and colour, we can refer to writing about *DSS37* for general insights into *DSS36*.

The two works display other, albeit minor, differences. In *DSS36* the slight reduction (.5 cm) in the height to the taller side of the bottom element reflected Judd’s original preference. Whereas the bottom element of *DSS37* was built in two parts (hence the visible line), the second version realized Judd’s original intention to have the base constructed in one part.²⁹¹ Judd’s objects were indeed “specific.” For practical reasons (the base of *DSS36* having not yet been built), the catalogue raisonné photograph shows the second, red lathe attached to the bottom element of *DSS37*. The Ottawa version is built of ¾-inch pine and ½-inch plywood.²⁹²

DSS37 represented the largest floor work in the Green Gallery show. Its “great wedge” has a quasi-monumental quality.²⁹³ Roberta Smith termed *DSS37* “one of Judd’s strangest” works, while noting his attraction to the parallelogram form.²⁹⁴ German scholar Thomas Kellein recently echoed her judgement, describing the work as “one of the strangest that the 1960s were to produce.”²⁹⁵ Smith, however, was attracted by the unusually “eccentric combination” of two elements, one substantial, the other two-

²⁹⁰ Donald Judd, “Some aspects of color and red and black in particular (1993),” in *Donald Judd Colorist*, ed. Deitmar Elger (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2000), 114.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² Stewart Meese, “Contemporary Art – Conservation and Restoration,” *Journal of the International Institute for Conservation – Canadian Group* 2, no. 1 (Autumn 1976): 32 in box 23, file 5 Donald Judd – Untitled (*DSS38*) 1963, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁹³ James Meyer, *Minimalism art and polemics in the sixties* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 56–7.

²⁹⁴ Roberta Smith, “Donald Judd,” *DSS*, 23.

²⁹⁵ Thomas Kellein, *Donald Judd: The Early Work 1955–68*, 37.

dimensional, noting that this was the last time Judd would use two shapes in a specific object.²⁹⁶

Because they combine two forms, *DSS36* and *DSS37* may, at first viewing, appear to lack the compact wholeness of the other Green Gallery floor works. Judd's practice, however, allowed for variations or experiments. As interpreted by Brydon Smith, one constant aspect of Judd's art is that "things which are different should remain separate and distinct."²⁹⁷ Forms may be ordered for different types of spatial relationships, but boundaries should not be merged or blurred. *DSS36* and *DSS37* adhere to these precepts: the two parts remain well defined and equal.

Smith did not remember how Judd became interested in parallelograms, but noted that they constitute a more dynamic form than squares or rectangles.²⁹⁸ The juxtaposition of acute and obtuse angles suggests the potential for movement, notwithstanding the overall symmetry. A 1952 etching titled *The League Stairwell*, which won Judd a juried prize at the Washington Square Outdoor Show, featured parallelograms in the staircase railings at the Art Students League, where Judd had studied in 1948–9.²⁹⁹ This interest in architectural detail anticipated Judd's preoccupation in the last decades of his life.

²⁹⁶ Brydon Smith, "Lecture Notes Donald Judd, February 20, 1975," box 9, file 6 Donald Judd Exhibition and Lecture, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁹⁷ Brydon Smith, "Some Memories and Thoughts about Donald Judd the man and his art on the occasion of his memorial service, 12 May 1994," box 9, file 6 Donald Judd exhibition and lecture (1975), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁹⁸ Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002, Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives.

²⁹⁹ Jeffrey Kopie, "Chronology," in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicolas Serota (London: Tate Publishing, 2004) 247. The same work is illustrated in Kellein, *Donald Judd: The Early Work, 1955–68*, 112.

Judd experimented in many early drawings with the wedge-like element and the lathe, playing with the lathe's placement and its interior hatching.³⁰⁰ Mariette Josephus Jitta identified the artist's twenty-six woodblocks of cadmium-red or cerulean blue parallelograms (1961–3) as “proposals” linked to his investigations into objects.³⁰¹ Judd later returned to the form with eighteen aquatints (1974–9) and twenty-seven etchings (1980–4), this time in black. Notwithstanding this extensive experimentation, Judd only created two three-dimensional versions.

On why Judd chose red for the Green Gallery floor sculptures, Smith recalled that the artist wanted a bright colour, darker than yellow, but easily registered by the viewer and allowing a clear reading of the edges of his objects.³⁰² Flavin had alerted Smith to how the cadmium-red floor pieces had impressed him when displayed at the Green Gallery in 1963–4. Smith believed that red effectively unified and defined the blocks of space in the way Judd wanted. Red falls in the range from pale to dark as a medium colour. It attracts the human eye.³⁰³ Judd's intuition proved to have some basis in science. Late in his career while looking into Newman's use of colour in *Voice of Fire*, Smith requested that the National Research Council of Canada provide a “history of the red cadmium line and its

³⁰⁰ *Donald Judd: Drawings 1956–76* (Basel, Halifax and New York: Kunstmuseum Basel, Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, New York University Press, 1976), figures 45–46, 49–52, 69–70, n.p.

³⁰¹ Mariette Josephus Jitta, “On Series,” in *Donald Judd Prints and Works in Editions*, eds. Mariette Josephus Jitta and Jörg Schellmann (Cologne-New York: Edition Schellmann, 1993), 21. See illustrations on pages 56–62 and 67–69.

³⁰² “Interview with Brydon Smith Conducted by Diana Nemiroff, 3 October 2002,” Brydon Smith Documentation File, NGC Library and Archives. This is also the source for the information in the remainder of this paragraph.

³⁰³ Biologist E.O. Wilson has noted that after black and white, red is the most common colour recognized in human societies. See: E.O. Wilson, “Is Everything Relative? A Debate on the Unity of Knowledge, E.O. Wilson's Remarks on Consilience.” http://www.naturalism.org/OffSite_Stored_Pages/WQ-WILRMK.htm, accessed 11 July 2014.

importance in physics.”³⁰⁴ The subsequent report pointed out that until 1960, scientists used the red cadmium line as the standard wavelength in spectroscopy based on the belief (since revised) that it generated the most accurate readings.

Judd’s use of colour became more varied later in his career but always formed an essential part of his vocabulary along with space and materials. Colour has, however, often been neglected in writing about Judd and about Minimalism generally.³⁰⁵ According to William Agee, Judd made colour at once: “...surface, volume, space, material, the organizing and unifying principle, and the very essence of his work.”³⁰⁶ In one interview the artist affirmed: “It is best to consider everything as colour.”³⁰⁷ Judd summarized his views on colour in his last public lecture in November 1993.³⁰⁸ He acknowledged the importance of Joseph Albers’ philosophical insight that every observer will perceive colours differently. Colour, as part of subjective human experience, also constitutes knowledge. In remembering Judd’s career, Smith pointed out that the artist “... started off as a painter and never lost the joy of colour.”³⁰⁹

³⁰⁴ G. Herzberg, Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics, Ottawa to Brydon Smith, 11 May 1990, Curatorial File *Voice of Fire*, NGC.

³⁰⁵ Dietmar Elger, “Introduction,” *Donald Judd Colorist* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hantje Cantz Publishers for Sprengel Museum and Musées de Nice), 11. See also David Batchelor, “Everything as Colour” in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicolas Serota, 64–75.

³⁰⁶ William C. Agee, “Donald Judd and the Endless Possibilities of Color,” in *Donald Judd Colorist*, 50.

³⁰⁷ Jochen Poetter, ed. “Back to Clarity, Interview with Donald Judd,” in *Donald Judd* (Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, 1989), 94. Cited in David Batchelor, “Everything as Colour,” in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicolas Serota, 74.

³⁰⁸ Donald Judd, “Some aspects of color and red and black in particular (1993),” in *Donald Judd Colorist*, ed. Deitmar Elger (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2000) 79–116. This article is the source of the information in this paragraph.

³⁰⁹ Brydon Smith, “A Warm Body in a Box,” *The Independent*, 17 January 1996, in box 23, file 1 Donald Judd – Articles, obituary, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

DSS36 and *DSS37* remain two of Judd's most striking and original works, both emblematic and enigmatic. The catalogue for the Whitney Museum's 1988 Judd retrospective and several others have illustrated one or the other.³¹⁰ The NGC collaborated with the VAG on a Judd exhibition in 1978 based on works from the permanent collection, including *DSS36*. This work was illustrated in the catalogue.³¹¹ By acquiring this major sculpture, linked to the break-through Green Gallery exhibition, Smith again chose a representative but also atypical piece produced at a turning point in an important artist's career.

The Ottawa catalogue contains no references to phenomenology or *Gestalt* theory, two philosophies associated with Minimalism since the mid-1960s. This was no oversight. Both Judd and Smith remained sceptical about such concepts as keys to understanding new art. Smith knew of these theories at least since 1969 when he placed a quote by Maurice Merleau-Ponty above his essay on Robert Murray for the catalogue of the São Paulo Biennial.³¹² This appears to have been an isolated instance in Smith's body of writing.

We do not know whether Judd ever pondered Merleau-Ponty's most celebrated observation: "Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the

³¹⁰ See Barbara Haskell, *Donald Judd* (New York: Whitney Museum, 1988), 44. The illustration is indicated as NGC, but the photograph shows the version in the Marfa collection with the black frame. See also:

Leszlo Gloser, *Westkunst Zeitgenössische Kunst seit 1939* (Cologne: Dumont Buchverlag, 1981), 463.

James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties*, 58.

Paul Wood, et al., *Modernism in Dispute: Art since the Forties* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press and the Open University, 1993), 189.

³¹¹ *Judd* (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1978), item 3 with illustration, n.p.

³¹² The quote reads: "... A body at rest because no force is being exerted upon it is, for sight, not the same thing as a body in which opposing forces are in equilibrium... Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. See Brydon Smith, "Robert Murray," *artscanada* XXVI, no. 136/137 (October 1969): 30.

visible spectacle constantly alive, it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms a system.”³¹³ Judd himself never theorized his art with reference to European philosophy, no matter how contemporary or profound. His American mindset defined itself partly through opposition to European art and writing. As his curator and cataloguer, Smith would have taken Judd’s views seriously and respected them.

Nor does one find any reference in the Ottawa catalogue to the discussions which had gone on since the mid-1960s in the pages of *Artforum* involving *inter alia* Judd’s most important American critics, Rosalind Krauss and Michael Fried. Fried equated Minimal, or “literalist” objects with theatre and anthropomorphism. He preferred the welded, modernist sculpture of Anthony Caro, which limited painterly colour while juxtaposing different shapes and manipulating materials to suggest meaning.³¹⁴ Krauss recognized the importance and unique aesthetic of Judd’s art, but rejected many of the artist’s theories finding more insight in the writings of Merleau-Ponty.³¹⁵ By the time of the Ottawa exhibition the critics had moved on to Wittgenstein and post-structuralism, although they would later return to Merleau-Ponty.³¹⁶ More recently and after consultations with Smith

³¹³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “The Theory of the Body is Already a Theory of Perception,” in *Minimalism*, ed. James Meyer (London: Phaidon, 2000), 196. The original text dates to 1945. Also published in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962): 203–05.

³¹⁴ Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood,” *Artforum* V, no. 10 (Summer 1967): 12–23.

³¹⁵ Rosalind Krauss, “Allusion and Illusion in Donald Judd,” *Artforum* IV, no. 9 (May 1966): 24–26.

³¹⁶ For a discussion of these trends see: Alex Potts, “The Phenomenological Turn,” in *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 207–234, and Stephen Melville, “Phenomenology and the Limits of Hermeneutics,” in *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, eds. M.A. Cheetham et al. (Cambridge, England and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 143–54.

For a Canadian curatorial reading of Phenomenology at this period, see: Roald Nasgaard, *Structures for Behaviour: New Sculptures by Robert Morris, David Rabinowitch, Richard Serra, and George Trakas* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1978), 37–42.

among others, David Raskin has underlined Judd's essentially American intellectual heritage, in particular his affinities with Ralph Barton Percy (1876–1957), a leading New Realist philosopher who believed in anchoring knowledge in “concrete facts and observable phenomena.”³¹⁷

Did this absence of theoretical and critical references detract from the NGC's publication or deprive readers or visitors of keys to understanding Judd's art? The NGC publication addressed the needs of both a general readership visiting the exhibition as well as a specialists interested in the catalogue raisonné section. For the general readership, keeping matters as straightforward as possible made Judd's new sculptural vocabulary less intimidating. Letting the objects speak for themselves kept the art open-ended. A populist and democrat, Judd believed that his work should be accessible to anyone. He sought to keep the viewer sovereign, a practice which Nicolas Serota considers one of his greatest accomplishments.³¹⁸ For Smith and Judd, the Ottawa exhibition provided an opportunity to present Judd on his own terms to a wider public audience.

Judd's animus toward American museums led him to establish his own viewing space in Marfa where his original vision would be respected. The artist's attitude to the NGC, however, appears consistently respectful. His letter of appreciation to Jean Boggs deserves to be quoted in its entirety:

Jean, I think I should send you a formal statement thanking and praising Brydon, you and the Gallery. I've never been involved in an enterprise so serious and well done and don't expect to again. Most of the time, I feel used by institutions; there was none of that. The book is a great thing to use. The chance to make some new pieces was important. Keeping the pieces and getting some money was perfect. The show looked

³¹⁷ Raskin “Judd's Moral Art” in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicolas Serota, 81.

³¹⁸ Nicolas Serota, “Donald Judd: A Sense of Place,” *ibid.*, 95.

fine. And nothing was demolished. Thanks for the book and the show. I'm happy about the whole thing. Don Judd.³¹⁹

In her acknowledgement, Boggs added that Smith “still feels radiant” about the exhibition.³²⁰

The Ottawa catalogue captured Judd's most productive, innovative period when his art was truly in the avant-garde. Since the Ottawa exhibition, efforts have been made to catalogue Judd's earlier production.³²¹ The artist's close involvement in the Ottawa installations has given them a special status. The NGC's 1975 grouping of cadmium-red works received a double-page colour illustration in the catalogue of the 2002 exhibition organized by The Menil Collection and the Kunsthalle Bielefeld.³²² The catalogue for this exhibition also referenced the NGC's publication by using the same light cadmium-red to frame its cover.

In 2003, the NGC's travelling exhibition *3 X 3*, curated by Diana Nemiroff, acknowledged Smith's prescient selection of minimalist masterpieces. *Globe and Mail* critic Sarah Milroy pointed out that this show recreated a moment when Canadian museums “dared to dream of themselves as global players, ambitiously placing themselves at the forefront of breaking developments in art, and setting a standard our museums struggle to live up to today.”³²³ Not counting works on paper and one piece of furniture, the NGC owns ten works by Judd, of which eight were acquired in 1973–6, one

³¹⁹ Donald Judd to Jean Boggs, 2 October 1975, box 9, file 6 Donald Judd Exhibition Lecture, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³²⁰ Jean Boggs to Donald Judd, 9 October 1975, box 3/3, file 91.17 Judd, Don, Don Judd Exhibition, Exhibition Files for Donald Judd, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³²¹ Thomas Kellein, *Donald Judd: The Early Work, 1955–68* (Bielefeld: Kunsthalle, 2002) and *Donald Judd. Late Work* (New York: Pace-Wildenstein, 2000).

³²² Kellein, *ibid.*, 110–111.

³²³ Sarah Milroy, “A Triumph of Minimalism,” *The Globe and Mail*, 1 November 2003.

in 1978, and one in 1998 by donation. Diana Nemiroff noted that this constitutes “an unusual concentration” and a collection unrivalled outside the Chinati Foundation, the repository of Judd’s collection in Marfa.³²⁴ Brydon Smith deserves credit for the quality and depth of this collection of master works by one of America’s leading postwar artists.

The Tate Modern’s Judd exhibition in 2004 included two NGC works among the forty-one shown. The catalogue itself contains multiple references to the 1975 exhibition and a double page illustration of Judd’s Ottawa installation of facing plywood boxes.³²⁵ As with the 1969 Flavin exhibition, Smith’s close collaboration with the artist helped ensure the lasting reference value of the catalogue. Ottawa, alongside New York and Marfa, shaped Judd’s legacy.

The 1975 Ottawa retrospective led to Smith’s ongoing curatorial engagement with Judd’s art in the following decades. American scholars such as James Meyer and David Raskin have sought out Smith’s expertise. Meyer wrote in sympathy to Smith after Judd’s death: “Now, your extraordinary installation of the early cadmium red works is all the more meaningful...”³²⁶ Judd included Smith among the trustees for his planned foundation as early as 1980.³²⁷ Smith served on the Board of Directors of the Chinati Public Foundation from 1986 to 1996 and as Vice-Chair from 1996–98. He also acted as

³²⁴ Diana Nemiroff, *3 X 3: Flavin, Andre, Judd*, paragraph 28.

³²⁵ Marianne Stockebrand, “Catalogue,” in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicolas Serota, 162, 174, 176, 188, 191, 204. For the illustration see 112–13.

³²⁶ James Meyer to Brydon Smith, 18 February 1994, box 23, file 1 Donald Judd articles, obituary, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³²⁷ Dudley Del Balso to Brydon Smith, 25 February 1980, box 22, file 10 Donald Judd Correspondence, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

a special advisor to the Donald Judd Foundation on the preservation and disposition of its collection after 1998, and as an honorary director in 2000.³²⁸

The 1975 Judd exhibition represents a career highlight for Smith in terms of exhibiting, publishing and acquisitions. In the later 1970s and 1980s, the NGC would respond to art world developments and broaden its collecting to different artists and new media. Smith, however, never let go of his commitment to Judd who today represents “one of the most influential American artists of the postwar period,” and one who “changed the course of modern sculpture.”³²⁹

³²⁸ Brydon Smith to Marianne Stockebrand, facsimile of 7 February, 1999, box 29, file 6 Chinati Foundation, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³²⁹ Nicolas Serota, *Donald Judd*, back cover.

Conclusion

Une collection est un lieu autobiographique, elle trace le cheminement parcouru par un individu et par la collectivité à laquelle il participe.³³⁰

Chantal Pontbriand

Pontbriand had Brydon Smith and the NGC in mind when she wrote that a collection reflects the common path traced by an individual and a social group. In the same editorial quoted above, Pontbriand specifically endorsed Smith's visionary acquisitions of a representative selection of works by a few outstanding international artists such as Donald Judd. My own research has examined a chapter in the NGC's history from a curatorial perspective, looking in particular at Smith's three early exhibitions along with their related publications and selected acquisitions. My findings can be seen as a case study on how the NGC's permanent collection took a significant new direction, under the agency of a curator with a keen eye and openness to new forms of art.

Smith's fundamental curatorial challenge involved development and integration of a *corpus* of contemporary American art within a national, public institution with an overriding mandate to collect and show Canadian art. By the late 1960s, American art was already ascendant globally and museum-quality work in high demand. The NGC's overall Canadian focus and limited resources argued against a broad, comprehensive approach to collecting. Smith's strategy was to focus on a few, emerging artists representing the most interesting, potentially important, trends, concepts and vocabularies. The judiciousness of his choices, many outstanding, have been tested and validated in the process of my enquiry.

³³⁰ Chantal Pontbriand, "Collections: Visions d'avenir," *Parachute* 54 (March-June 1989): 6. This is also the source of information noted in the first paragraph.

Between 1967 and 1979, Smith built from the ground up an impressive core collection of postwar American art, including leading artists associated with Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, and Minimalism. A relative newcomer to the art world, Smith staked his reputation on the originality and lasting importance of rising American artists such as Rosenquist, Flavin and Judd. He accorded them museum validation before most established institutions in their home country. He showed these artists unusual respect by involving them closely in the installation of their art and the content of their catalogues, even when they made unprecedented demands. His ground-breaking work with Dan Flavin's "situations," and earlier with the Les Levine "environment," pioneered installation art in Canadian museums even before the term was in wide use. By 1979, the NGC had created the foremost collection of postwar American art in Canada which, in both quality and scope, has stood up to international scrutiny over time. A review of Smith's approximately 67 American acquisitions up until 1979 (Appendix 1), demonstrates both bold choices and a concentration on emerging artists poised to enter the canon. His impressive post-1979 acquisitions of masterworks by Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko and Agnes Martin firmly situated the younger artists he focused on within the narrative of ambition and achievement of the preceding, immediately postwar generation.

Smith's exhibitions, publications, and acquisitions could only have been accomplished through a deep knowledge of the American art scene, familiarity with the related literature, and sustained communication with artists and the broader arts community in the U.S.A. His extensive correspondence and other contacts with leading American art world figures cited in the preceding chapters illustrate the respect earned by

the NGC in the decade after it opened its collection to American art. In line with Bruno Latour's definition of a mediator, Smith influenced a wider network of professionals who were interpreting and validating the achievement of advanced American art within and beyond the borders of the U.S.A. His informed aesthetic viewpoint transformed the NGC's collection, giving it shape and direction.

Smith chose examples of some of the most radical, ground-breaking art of the 1960s and 1970s. Former NGC Curator of European Art, Louise d'Argencourt, once sceptical about Smith's choices, felt "overwhelmed by their strength" on revisiting the NGC after an absence of some years.³³¹ The work of Rosenquist, Flavin, Andre, and Judd continues to interest artists, critics, curators and viewers in North America and Europe. Thanks to Smith, the NGC possesses rare, prime examples of their early and most innovative works.

In his overall collecting, Smith showed a preference for abstract sculpture and three-dimensional works combining realism with a conceptual framework. This was true not only for works by Flavin, Andre and Judd, but also for those he acquired by Joseph Cornell, Tony Smith, David Smith, Les Levine, Nancy Graves, Robert Morris, Andy Warhol, George Segal, and Claes Oldenburg. Critics from Greenberg onwards had predicted the end of easel painting and many artists were experimenting with new forms of production. Smith, while strongly influenced by these cultural currents, would still seize opportunities to acquire an important, mural-sized painting from an artist such as Rosenquist, who extended the avant-garde painterly tradition in his own manner. He also added examples of historical precedents from earlier decades with important paintings by artists such as Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still, and Arshile Gorky.

³³¹ Cited in Jean Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box 6 Personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

Smith's aesthetics grew out of his studies and professional experiences in the early 1960s at the University of Toronto and the AGO. Under mentors such as Robert Welsh, he gained a depth of historical understanding of postwar American art and the knowledge to spot important new developments. As a young curator, he proved perfectly in tune with the newest North American art, which earlier NGC curators and directors, prior to Boggs's arrival, had resisted. His experience at the AGO gave him a network of knowledgeable patrons and collectors, such as those in the AGO Women's Committee, and private galleries displaying vanguard American art (Isaacs, Jerrold Morris, David Mirvish), that became a base on which to expand contacts at the national and international levels.

Kitty Scott, AGO curator and a former NGC colleague of Smith, noted that curators tend to have "long conversations" over their career with the artists with whom they are most comfortable.³³² Smith can be seen to have followed this pattern with Flavin and Judd in particular. Exceptionally, however, he was inspired to new bursts of curatorial vision in his late career. Working as the new building coordinator in the 1980s, a position he was initially reluctant to take on, not only out of preference for a downtown location, but also from an attachment to the Lorne Building itself despite its many shortcomings,³³³ Smith nonetheless saw the potential of the planned architectural spaces and helped shape their design to accommodate his vision for the collection. He seized the opportunity offered by a high-ceilinged gallery, originally conceived for the large war art pictures from the Beaverbrook collection, to make a bold statement about postwar American art, in particular the large-scale paintings associated with Abstract Expressionism.

³³² Interviews with Kitty Scott on 31 March and 1 April 2014.

³³³ Jean Sutherland Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box 6 Personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fond, NGC Library and Archives.

In line with this vision, Smith's brought two major American painters to Ottawa with the spectacular acquisitions of Newman's *Voice of Fire* in 1989 and Rothko's *No. 16* in 1993. These pieces complemented the sculptures he had previously acquired by Barnett Newman and Tony Smith, as well as the paintings by Gorky, Pollock and Still. With these unique, late Abstract Expressionist acquisitions, Smith rounded out and completed his curatorial vision for a new NGC gallery dedicated to the leading artists of this influential postwar movement. He weathered the ensuing political firestorms over his aesthetic choices and curatorial judgement, remaining unshaken in his convictions. Now, we are grateful that he sought out and capitalized on these once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Today, any contemporary or modern art museum would welcome such significant works by Newman or Rothko, but would be unlikely to possess the financial resources to acquire them.

Smith also addressed gaps in representation of important women artists. He arranged, by a combination of purchase and donation, to acquire Nancy Graves's unique group *Camels VI, VII and VIII* in 1969 along with her sculpture *Variability and Repetition of Forms* in 1972, and a selection of her films and prints. Graves also benefited from dedicated NGC exhibitions in 1971 and 1973. Smith's late acquisition of Agnes Martin's *White Flower I 1985*, purchased in 1995, brought into the NGC an important work by a major postwar artist, born in Canada. Long undervalued by a male-dominated art establishment, Martin's relative standing has continued to grow.

The NGC's place in the history of art as an early champion of Rosenquist, Flavin, and Judd, confirmed by critical attention at the time, has been consolidated in subsequent decades by the many published illustrations of works from its collection along with

photographs of its exhibition installations. The NGC curatorial files reveal that loan and publication requests from leading American and European institutions and scholars continue to this day. References in recent critical literature to NGC-owned works also confirm their importance. The ongoing stature of its American collection is evidence of a remarkable legacy, developed in a short timeframe, and one starkly contrasting with the period before 1966 when the NGC did not collect American art.

In her above-mentioned editorial, Pontbriand also wrote approvingly of the overall coherence of the NGC's American collection as a reflection of its time. In art histories of the period, NGC-owned works such as Andy Warhol's *Brillo Boxes* and George Segal's *The Gas Station* have been selected as prime examples of cultural expression in the 1960s. In addition to Pop Art, Smith favoured works which used industrial materials to create a new aesthetic language, based on objective, non-expressive artistic vocabularies and clean, simple forms. This Minimalist aesthetic reflects its period while remaining influential with artists and curators. The 1960s and 1970s were also decades of protest. Smith's choices of works with contemporary themes such as civil rights in Rosenquist's *Painting for the American Negro* or the Vietnam War in Flavin's *monument 4 for those killed in ambush (to P.K. who reminded me about death)* connect the NGC collection to this time. These works also raised wider issues about race and conflict which remain relevant to viewers today.

Smith built the NGC's rich contemporary collection in a societal context where a younger generation, eager for change and rejecting past standards, challenged a conservative establishment, largely unfamiliar with or hostile to the latest American art. Pierre Théberge lauded Smith's "heroic," unstinting advocacy for contemporary art,

noting the scepticism he faced from other curators and Visiting Committee members by the late 1970s.³³⁴ Canadian artists and cultural observers, closer to the radical politics of the day, however, generally welcomed the NGC's fresh departures showing openness to the newest art exhibited and acquired by Smith. As Boggs hoped, the NGC's credibility among insiders as well as positive visitor experiences influenced over time Canadian perceptions of new forms of art. Along the way, public support for a new gallery building increased.

Even at the end of his career, Smith's discerning aesthetic judgement and determination remained strong features of his curating. Shirley Thomson described Smith as "'persistent', 'obsessive' and possessing 'one of the finest eyes in the business.'"³³⁵ Pierre Théberge also observed: "He could say exactly what was not worthy of the collection."³³⁶ Today, history has proved the discernment shown by Smith in terms of both American and European art.

In addition to his excellent eye, Smith's curatorial practice was distinguished by collecting in depth from the artists in whom he believed. In a briefing to the Visiting Committee in 1978, Smith argued that an artist's work can be better understood "when the viewer has the opportunity of seeing the artist's development of an idea or the artist's variation on a theme."³³⁷ He also reasoned that groups of objects would make for more effective touring exhibitions, citing the clusters of works by Duchamp and Judd. Smith defended his practice of selecting "important but unusual work...something which would

³³⁴ Interview with the author on 9 January 2014.

³³⁵ Cited in Paul Gessell, "Retired, not retiring," *National Post*, 10 April 1999, Brydon Smith Documentation and Clippings File, NGC Library and Archives.

³³⁶ Interview with the author on 9 January 2014.

³³⁷ "Report on Collections", Minutes of the Visiting Committee for the National Gallery of Canada, 11 March 1978, 1426, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives. This report is also the source of the information in this paragraph.

be a surprise to Gallery visitors familiar with the text-book examples.” By way of illustration, he cited his acquisitions by Rosenquist, Pollock, Oldenburg and Andre.

Smith’s unrelenting focus could be both a drawback and an advantage. John O’Brian, Professor of Art History at the University of British Columbia and an advisor to the acquisitions committee of the NGC Board, noted his “monocular” vision as both his greatest strength and a weakness.³³⁸ Former curator and gallery owner David Bellman remains critical of what he termed Smith’s “narrow-gauge approach to collecting.”³³⁹ Nonetheless, curator and Ph.D. candidate Adam Welch, who recently reconfigured the NGC’s galleries devoted to art of this period, described the NGC’s holdings as “easily the most impressive collection in Canada and a very strong, focussed collection which stands up to many in the U.S.”³⁴⁰ Phyllis Lambert, a former member of the Visiting Committee (1977–88) and advisor to the NGC on photography acquisition since 1991, noted that the NGC collection may not be large, but that it is distinguished and stands out internationally for its discriminating choices and vision.³⁴¹ On balance, focussing the NGC’s collecting effectively centred the collection on works by outstanding artists representative of major movements, avoiding the pitfalls of a shot-gun approach lacking overall coherence. This practice leveraged relatively modest resources while making best use of curatorial expertise.³⁴²

³³⁸ Email to the author of 8 December 2013.

³³⁹ Email to the author of 17 January 2014.

³⁴⁰ Email to the author of 2 January 2014.

³⁴¹ Interview with Phyllis Lambert 16 July 2014.

³⁴² The “target figure” for contemporary international art averaged only \$109,018 from 1968–9 to 1978–9, representing a mere 7.3% of the average total acquisition budget of \$1,502,205. See *Annual Reports of the Visiting Committee, 1968–9 to 1979–80*. I have used an average as the budgets fluctuated up and down.

It is worth noting that the NGC always exercised a more rigorous selection process for contemporary non-Canadian art given the greater range of choices and greater likelihood of criticism.³⁴³ In such an institutional and market context, additional onus was placed on the curator to select artists and works with genuine staying power. Smith, thus, had a more difficult, exposed assignment than his colleagues dealing with historic or Canadian art.

Smith did not escape criticism within Canada for his close ties to the New York art world. In 1980, Ken Carpenter wrote in *artmagazine* that the NGC resembled “a branch plant” of the Castelli Gallery.³⁴⁴ Carpenter and some artists and critics, especially in the West, adhered to Clement Greenberg’s modernist narrative, favouring colour field painting and the compositional sculpture of Anthony Caro. Carpenter’s claim does not hold up when Smith’s overall acquisitions are considered. Castelli, while cooperating with loans for Smith’s three major exhibitions, by no means enjoyed a lock on NGC purchases.³⁴⁵ Among Smith’s early acquisitions, Rosenquist’s mixed media sculpture *Capillary Action II* came from the Sonnabend Gallery in Paris, owned by Castelli’s former wife Ileana. The Pollock painting was acquired via the Marlborough Gallery. Flavin’s early work, *the nominal three*, came from the Dwan Gallery. The reconstructed Judd pieces acquired in 1975 were arranged direct with the artist.³⁴⁶ In Smith’s defence, it

³⁴³ Jean Boggs, *A Policy for the National Gallery of Canada* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1975), 13A.

³⁴⁴ Ken Carpenter, “Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada: Some Issues of Policy,” *artmagazine* 11, No. 48/9 (May/June 1980): 34, Brydon Smith Documentation and Clippings File, NGC Library and Archives.

³⁴⁵ Castelli represented both Rosenquist and Judd (after 1965), while Flavin moved from the Dwan Gallery to Castelli while his Ottawa exhibition was being planned.

³⁴⁶ Castelli may have received a commission under his agreement with Judd for these reconstructions. Other NGC works acquired from other galleries in 1973 included El Lizzitsky’s *Proun 8 Stellungen* from Harold Diamond; Clyfford Still’s *1949-G* from the

must also be pointed out that Castelli represented many of the most significant American artists of the day.

While Smith's primary legacy resides with the collection of American art, he also strengthened the holdings of modern European art in ways which complemented his American art history narrative. To this end, Smith secured major, modern European masterpieces by Braque, Duchamp, Mondrian, Klee, El Lissitzky, Picabia, Dali, and Magritte. Works of this quality by these artists would, for the most part, be either unavailable or beyond the NGC's means to acquire today. Securing a complete set of Duchamp's Readymades in 1971 also represented a real coup.

In the 1980s as European art again became prominent, Smith was increasingly engaged with management issues. Smith and the NGC faced criticism about a perceived neglect of Europeans and others associated with modernist painting and sculpture. In the above noted article, Carpenter echoed Michael Fried's reservations about Judd and Minimalist art in general.³⁴⁷ This argument would strike many observers today as a minority view. Others in the art world, such as Pierre Théberge and David Bellman, also believe Smith under-valued postwar European art, although they recognize the excellence of his early-twentieth-century acquisitions and his persistence in getting them. Smith, however, kept an open mind and encouraged younger curators such as Jessica Bradley to pursue emerging, avant-garde Europeans such as Giuseppe Penone and Richard Long. In the early 1990s, he supported Diana Nemiroff's interest in the Indo-British sculptor Anish

Marlborough Gallery; Duchamp's *Red Nude* from Fourcade Droll, N.Y. as agent for Mary Sisler; and Gerhard Richter's *Cloud* from Rudolf Zwirner. See: Minutes of the Visiting Committee, 30 May 1973, 336-7, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives. Examples from 1977 included Alexander Calder's *Jacaranda* acquired from Harold Diamond, and Barnett Newman's *The Way I* acquired from Annalee Newman. See: Minutes of the Visiting Committee of 9 May 1977, *ibid.*, 1076.

³⁴⁷ Carpenter, *ibid.*, 36.

Kapoor, a cosmopolitan artist hybridizing several cultures, who has enjoyed a prominent global career. To his lasting credit, Smith also made timely investments in important works by German contemporary artists Gerhard Richter and Joseph Beuys, who now stand as major figures in world art. It is important to remember that Boggs and the NGC Trustees had decided in this period to build up the American collection within a new area of collecting. During the 1967 to 1979 period, on which this thesis is focussed, New York was where a considerable body of exciting new art was being produced.

Over his entire period at the NGC, Smith acquired approximately 82 American works versus 32 European.³⁴⁸ This proportion reflected the NGC's priorities at that time. Gyde Shepherd, the NGC's first full-time curator of European art, pointed out that critics missed the point about "keypoint" or selective collecting of American artists as "... a counterbalance to the broader collections of European art."³⁴⁹ Looking back with the benefit of hindsight, Smith's choices from both sides of the Atlantic have largely stood the test of time. Even critic David Bellman concedes that Smith's choices were never parochial.

For Jean Boggs, all NGC activities gave priority to examining and giving a context to judge Canadian art.³⁵⁰ Smith thus paid close attention to the practices of Canadian artists as well as trends in the U.S.A. By the 1960s, the American art world was divided

³⁴⁸ This comparison counts the set of Duchamp's Readymades as 13 works. A breakdown in the growth of the NGC collection done for Jean Boggs indicated that between 1 April 1966 and 9 August 1974 paintings and sculpture by American artists from all periods still only amounted to 3.46% of the collection, although the share had risen from 1.28% at the time she opened the collection to their works. Europeans artists still outnumbered Americans by 85 to 35. See: Boggs, *A Policy for a National Gallery*, Appendix X, n.p.

³⁴⁹ Email to the author of 9 January 2014.

³⁵⁰ Boggs, *A Policy for a National Gallery*, 13C. She also cited this as a reason for the NGC's decision to pay attention to contemporary art produced outside Canada. See Boggs, "Preface," *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, 3.

between those attached to second-generation Abstract Expressionism and Greenberg's modernist narrative, and those who championed Pop Art and Minimalism. Smith gave his allegiance to the latter group, whose ideas, values, and aesthetics corresponded to his own. They were also the artists having the greatest impact on the work of Canadian artists.

Smith's preference for solo exhibitions constitutes another interesting and innovative feature of his curating. Before his time, group shows such as biennials or art society exhibitions were more often the norm at the NGC. Among her other initiatives, Jean Boggs had begun steering the NGC away from surveys toward solo or small group exhibitions, providing Smith with an opportunity and support for his plans. Though novel at the time for young artists in museum settings, one-person exhibitions were for the Smith the most effective way to engage deeply with a serious artist. Solo exhibitions also provided exceptional opportunities to build the permanent collection. They effectively complemented his focussed approach to collecting. Such exhibitions succeed, however, only when the curator has the in-depth knowledge of an artist and his artistic milieu to choose effectively.

The critical reaction to Smith's three early NGC exhibitions was positive. Pierre Théberge termed them "admirable," underlining that they allowed many Canadians to experience new forms of art for the first time.³⁵¹ Smith's three mid-career retrospectives have had an enduring impact on the chosen artists' careers, providing overviews of their early development while staking out their future place in art history. All three shows provided the artists concerned with well-timed museum exposure and dedicated publications. The NGC's thorough Flavin and Judd catalogues have defined the contours

³⁵¹Théberge, *ibid.*

of the artists' early production and provided a solid basis for work by later scholars. One-person exhibitions called for sustained, intense collaboration between artist and curator, moving beyond traditional boundaries. By listening attentively to artists and finding ways to accommodate their views in both the exhibitions and their catalogues, Smith's insights and choices were enriched.

The absence of substantive, critical essays from Smith as curator of the three exhibitions studied cannot be denied, although he compensated in part by bringing in articulate American writers such as Donald Judd and Roberta Smith. Nor was Smith a prolific writer outside of his catalogues. The American co-curator of Flavin's 2004 retrospective, Tiffany Bell, remembered her efforts to get Smith to make his catalogue essay more personal.³⁵² His writing, solid and cautious, did not achieve the poetry of the best art writing but reflected his own style, his training based on formal observation and description, his background in science, as well as his preference to let the art speak directly to the viewer.

While a limitation in one sense, Smith's restraint in interpreting art arose from a deep respect for the artist and his creations. Professor John O'Brian, who first met Smith in the mid-1980s while a Ph.D. candidate at Harvard, wrote: "I had never met anyone like him, anyone who chose his words so carefully, who weighed his sentences as if balancing the scales of justice, for whom art had an unwavering moral dimension."³⁵³ Reading Smith's articles confirms the impression of his caution in choosing the right words to describe art, never suggesting anything which might go beyond the artist's intention.

³⁵² Tiffany Bell, email to the author of 2 January 2014.

³⁵³ John O'Brian, email to the author of 8 December 2013.

This respectful stance vis-à-vis the artist is evident in the careful, meticulous editing which Smith gave to his exhibition catalogues. The quality of the scholarship, drawing on input from the artist, has ensured their enduring value. Their innovative and successful graphics animated the publications with the spirit of the art. Smith's former colleagues admired his skills. Jean Boggs noted that he "achieved a reputation as the most demanding editor in the Gallery."³⁵⁴

In recent scholarship and practice, Smith's brand of curating has gained greater currency while the model of the curator as *auteur*, imposing his own voice, has declined. The innovative role played by artists in staging exhibitions as a medium has also gained recognition.³⁵⁵ Judd himself has inspired an ethical model of curating which aims to eliminate distractions and help the viewer spend time with each work.³⁵⁶ Smith's intensive collaboration with artists such as Judd and his restraint in imposing curatorial or theory-based templates have proved ahead of its time.

In her 1975 acquisition policy document, Jean Boggs observed that a museum collection reflects both the knowledge and the aesthetic choices of those running them, but: "... it is the people making the selection rather than the policy that in the end determine the quality of what is acquired."³⁵⁷ Smith's teamwork with Boggs confirms that observation. It was she who recruited him to both the AGT and the NGC and he worked most creatively and productively under her direction. While she did not always share his aesthetic choices, she respected his curatorial autonomy and became his enabler.

³⁵⁴ Jean Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box 6 Personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³⁵⁵ Terry Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2012), 128–31.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 133–35.

³⁵⁷ Jean Boggs, *A Policy for the National Gallery of Canada*, 13.

Boggs had sought him out in part to carry out her strategy of opening the collection to contemporary developments in American art. She then gave him the space to exercise his curatorial skills. She let Smith take the risk of choosing artists with limited museum exposure, such as Rosenquist or Flavin, for solo exhibitions. She provided the resources to take on and complete the ambitious Judd catalogue raisonné. Behind the scenes, she helped with trouble-shooting, for example, when some trustees objected to the Jackson Pollock acquisition. Like Smith, she favoured the “most adventurous living artists outside Canada” recognizing that this was a gamble which “can only be won through a combination of knowledge and daring.”³⁵⁸ Smith established and consolidated his reputation for creative curating thanks to Jean Boggs’s consistent support.

Part of Smith’s influence in shaping the permanent collection can be attributed to his relative longevity at the NGC from 1967–99, serving under six directors.³⁵⁹ In 1976, the year following the Judd exhibition, a major shift occurred with the departure of Jean Boggs and her replacement by Hsio-Yen Shih. (Smith himself had been a candidate.) In spite of differences with Shih, he was promoted in 1979 to the position of Director of Research and Collections, equivalent to that of Chief Curator today. With this move into management, however, Smith’s days of curating major exhibitions were effectively over.³⁶⁰ His attention tended to focus on issues with the tutelage of the National Museums Corporation and plans for the new building. His acquisitions would continue, but at a reduced pace.

³⁵⁸ “Appendix 5,” 442, Minutes of the Visiting Committee for the National Gallery of Canada, 27 August 1974, NGC fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³⁵⁹ In the NGC’s long history, the length of Smith’s curatorial career is comparable only to that of R. H. Hubbard who was associated with the NGC since 1947 and served as Chief Curator from 1954–78.

³⁶⁰ For a list of Smith’s exhibitions, see Appendix II.

As Assistant Director, Smith, nonetheless, maintained an open mind and curiosity about new forms of art as well as contemporary political and social matters. Consistent with his sensitivity to issues of the day, Smith showed responsiveness to concerns about the lack of representation of indigenous artists in the NGC collection. In addition to encouraging collection of their work, he ensured that the acquisitions policy was amended to refer specifically to inclusion of aboriginal artists. He was also responsible for negotiating the transfer to the NGC of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs collection of contemporary Inuit art, which was finalized in 1989.

Smith also recruited younger curators such as Diana Nemiroff and Jessica Bradley. He proved a worthy, generous mentor, encouraging bold choices. They in turn devoted priority to emerging artists often working with new styles and media. David Bellman praised Smith's unwavering allegiance to art as a "counter-environment" in McLuhan's sense of that term, and his "generously non-conformist/contrarian mentality."³⁶¹ In a letter nominating Smith for the Order of Canada, Jean Boggs confirmed that his acquisitions had met her goal of opening up the collection. She concluded that Smith's recommendations "... made the Gallery seem less parochial and also more in tune with the contemporary world outside Canada."³⁶² Smith's acquisitions represented a significant expansion of the NGC's collection in both time period and geographic reach. It made the NGC part of a larger conversation, one more contemporary and engaging for Canadian artists and viewers. It effectively widened the visual experiences of Canadians, giving them greater access to international perspectives, at a time when the debate about new forms of art was still fully engaged.

³⁶¹ Email to the author of 17 January 2014.

³⁶² Jean Boggs to Jacqueline Barton, 22 April 2003, box 6 Personal, file 23 Brydon Smith (2003), Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

Recent museum studies have suggested that it is more productive to discuss museums as operators in a number of partially connected networks involving people, ideas and things.³⁶³ This study of Brydon Smith's career at the NGC in the years 1967–79 has focussed on his curatorial agency and its impact on building a national collection of international standing. This exploration has revealed new information about the history of the NGC and its networks at a time when it strove to expand the scope of its collecting. It has also exposed a largely overlooked and unprecedented involvement of the NGC in a broader North American cultural discourse.

Smith's pioneering role, his excellent eye, his high professional standards of integrity, fairness and commitment to contemporary art and artists remain salient features of his curatorial practice. Notwithstanding his general avoidance of theory as a curatorial tool to present art, it is worth noting his respect for writer and cultural critic John Berger who influenced and reinforced his thinking "about the interpretation and display or works of art, as well as the purposes of art museums in our society."³⁶⁴ Well known in his day, Berger popularized access to classical art through his books and his 1972 BBC series *Ways of Seeing*, an everyman's perspective on art contrasting with Sir Kenneth Clark's more patrician program *Civilisation*.³⁶⁵ Like Berger, Smith believed in making art freely accessible to anyone who looked closely and at length. He endorsed Berger's advocacy for democratizing the museum experience, leaving out the need for a cultural elite to analyse it for the masses.

³⁶³ Andrew Dwedney, David Dibosa and Victoria Walsh, *Post-Critical Museology: Theory and Practice in the Art Museum* (London: Routledge, 2013), 220, 246.

³⁶⁴ Brydon Smith to William Withrow, 21 April 1978, box 16, file 3 Personal Employment and Job Seeking, Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives.

³⁶⁵ For information in this paragraph see John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Viking Press, 1971) and review Eunice Lipton, "Book Review John Berger's 'Ways of Seeing,'" *The Fox* 2 (1975): 1–3.

By the end of the 1970s under Smith's guidance, the NGC had assembled an impressive collection of postwar American art, representing its period with groups of works by leading artists. This effectively advanced Boggs's goal of expanding the visual horizons of Canadians and their artists at a period, post Expo '67, when the country had gained a new confidence in its identity and place in the world.

As art journalist Paul Gessell predicted on Smith's retirement, he "...will never really leave the National Gallery. The walls and halls are filled with the paintings, sculptures, and installations he has gathered from around the world. They will undoubtedly be there as long as there is a National Gallery."³⁶⁶ The NGC spaces now devoted to international art of the twentieth century display, as Chantal Pontbriand suggested, a kind of collective autobiographical site which will evolve with successive generations. While Smith as creator/curator has been subsumed into his creation, the NGC collection strongly reflects his adventurous taste and prescient acquisitions. His achievement, the patient and informed work of a lifetime, merits the respect and appreciation of Canadians now and in the future.

³⁶⁶ Paul Gessell, "Full Frontal View of 20th Century Art," *National Post*, 12 April 1999, Brydon Smith Documentation and Clippings File, NGC Library and Archives.

Bibliography (by source and topic)

I. National Gallery of Canada (NGC) and other Primary Sources

- Brydon Smith Documentation and Clippings Files. NGC Library and Archives.
- Brydon Smith fonds. NGC Library and Archives.
- Curatorial Files. Office of the Chief Curator. NGC.
- Donald Judd (Exhibition Records) 1973–79. NGC fonds. NGC Library and Archives.
- fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin (Exhibition Records) 1969. NGC fonds. NGC Library and Archives.
- James Rosenquist (Exhibition Records) 1968–9. NGC fonds. NGC Library and Archives.
- Jean Sutherland Boggs fonds. NGC Library and Archives.
- Pollock-Krasner Papers. Archive of American Art. Accessed 17 November 2013.
http://www.aaa.si.edu/assets/images/collectionsonline/pollock/fullsize/AAA_jpoljack_78
- Visiting Committee. Minutes of Meetings 1967–80. NGC fonds. NGC Library and Archives.

II. Works by Canadian Authors on the NGC, and/or Related to Canadian Art and Culture

- Barber, Bruce, Serge Guilbault, and John O'Brian, eds. *Voices of Fire: Art, Rage, Power, and the State*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
- Boggs, Jean Sutherland. *The National Gallery of Canada*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- . *A Policy for a National Gallery*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada for the National Museums Corporation, 1975.
- Buium, Greg. "Firestorm: The National Gallery's Acquisition of Voice of Fire Created a Massive Controversy. Could it Happen Today?" *The Walrus* (March 2010). Accessed 17 December, 2012. <http://walrusmagazine.com/articles/2010.03-visual-art-firestorm/2/>
- Burnett, David. "Donald Judd: The National Gallery of Canada." *artscanada* XXXII, no. 202/3 (Winter 1975–76): 28–32.

- Carpenter, Ken. "Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada: Some Issues of Policy." *Artmagazine* 11, no. 48/9 (May/June 1980): 34–39.
- Constable, W.G. *Canaletto*. Toronto: s.n. 1964. Exhibition catalogue.
- Couture, Francine. "To Re-exhibit or to Produce the Original Work?" *Espace 71* (Spring 2005): 6–11.
- Crean, Susan. *Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?* Don Mills: General Publishing, 1976.
- Dexter, Gail. "Yes, cultural imperialism too!" In *Close the 49th Parallel etc. the Americanization of Canada*, edited by Ian G. Lumsden, 157–67. Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the University League for Social Reform, 1971.
- Geddes, John. "Voice of Fire: Are We Over This Yet?" *Maclean's* (25 January 2010): 52–54.
- Gosselin, Claude. "Donald Judd." *Vie des Arts* XX, no. 80 (Autumn 1975): 82–3.
- Hale, Barrie. "At the National Gallery: A New Show Heralds a Bright New Era." *The Star Weekly Magazine* (10 February 1968): 44–5.
- . "Why This Man Thinks That Camels Can Change the Way You See the World." *Maclean's* (May 1970): 44–48.
- Leclerc, Denise and Pierre Dessureault. *The Sixties in Canada*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2005. Exhibition catalogue.
- Legge, Elizabeth. *Michael Snow: Wavelength*. London and Cambridge, MA: Afterall Books and MIT Press, 2009.
- Livingstone, Marco, ed. *Pop Art*. Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1992. Exhibition catalogue.
- Lord, Barry. *The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art*. Toronto: NC Press, 1974.
- Mainprize, Gary. "The National Gallery of Canada: A Hundred Years of Exhibitions." *RACAR* XI 1–2 (1984): 1–78.
- Malcolmson, Harry. "Who'll run Canadian Art?" *Saturday Night* (May 1968): 31–32.
- . "Art: Light and Shade Conveyed by a Fluorescent Tube are Aesthetic Enough in Character to Make for Powerful and Compelling Art." *Saturday Night* (November 1969): 68.

- Mays, John Bentley. "Master Plan." *Canadian Art* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 34–39.
- Meese, Stewart. "Contemporary Art – Conservation and Restoration." *Journal of the International Institute for Conservation – Canadian Group* 2, No. 1 (Autumn 1976): 30–33.
- Meyer, François. "Entretien avec Brydon Smith." *Vie des Arts* XIV, no. 58 (Spring 1970): 56–9.
- Michener, Wendy. "Jean Boggs: The Woman They Didn't Want." *Chatelaine* (June 1968): 29, 74–5.
- Nasgaard, Roald. *Abstract Painting in Canada*. Vancouver and Halifax: Douglas & MacIntyre and Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2007.
- . *Selections from the Roger and Myra Davidson Collection of International Contemporary Art*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1986. Exhibition catalogue.
- . *Structures for Behaviour: New Sculptures by Robert Morris, David Rabinowitch, Richard Serra and George Trakas*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1978. Exhibition catalogue.
- . and William J. Withrow. *1945–80: Volunteer Committee Acquisitions*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1980.
- National Gallery of Canada. *Acquisitions Policy*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2000.
- . *Annual Review (1968–9 until 1975–6) and Annual Bulletin (1977–80)*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer for the National Gallery of Canada, 1968–1981.
- National Museums of Canada. *Annual Reports (1968–79)*. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1968–79.
- Nemiroff, Diana. *3 X 3: Flavin, Andre, Judd*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2003. Exhibition catalogue.
- Ord, Douglas. *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas, Art, Architecture*. Montreal: McGill and Queen's University Press, 2003.
- Pontbriand, Chantal. "Editorial/Éditoriale Collections: Visions d'avenir." *Parachute* 54 (March–June 1989): 5–6.

- Smith, Brydon. "Acquisitions of Modern Art by Museums: Ottawa – Piet Mondrian's *Composition II*, 1936/52." *The Burlington Magazine* 114 (February 1972): 123. Accessed 8 August 2013 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/876896>
- . ed. *Dine, Oldenburg, Segal: Painting/Sculpture*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1967. Exhibition catalogue.
- . "Donald Judd: Random Thoughts Three Years Later." *Vanguard* 7 (May 1978): 15.
- . ed. *Donald Judd*. Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada for the National Museums Corporation, 1975. Exhibition catalogue.
- . ed. *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969. Exhibition catalogue.
- . "The Image of its Author: A Note on Michael Snow's 'Authorization'." *Saturday Night* (May 1970): 22–23.
- . "An Interview with Les Levine." In *Slipcover: a Place by Les Levine*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1966. Exhibition Catalogue.
- . "Jackson Pollock (1912–1956): Abstracting over the Figure." *National Gallery of Canada Review* III (October 2002): 29–38.
- . ed. *James Rosenquist*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968. Exhibition catalogue.
- . "Recent Acquisitions: The National Gallery – from the United States." *artscanada* XXV, no. 4 (October–November 1968): 47.
- . "Recollections and Thoughts about Dan Flavin." In *Dan Flavin the Complete Lights 1961–96*, edited by Michael Govan and Tiffany Bell, 131–44. New York, New Haven and London: Dia Art Foundation and Yale University Press, 2004.
- . "Robert Murray." *artscanada* XXVI, no. 136/7 (October 1969): 30–34.
- . *Robert Murray*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1969. Exhibition catalogue.
- . "Some Thoughts about the Making and Meaning of Voice of Fire." In *Voices of Fire: Art, Rage, Power, and the State*, edited by Bruce Barber, Serge Guilbault, and John O'Brian, 163–79, 202. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
- . and Dan Flavin. *Supplement to fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*. Exhibition catalogue. Also printed in *artscanada* XXVI, no. 136/7 (October 1969): 14–19.

- . “Willem de Kooning: *Woman II*, 1952” and “Jackson Pollock, *Cathedral*, 1947.” In *Man and his World International Fine Arts Exhibition*, 60–61, 336–37. Montreal: Expo ‘67, 1967. Exhibition catalogue.
- Snow, Michael. *The Collected Writings of Michael Snow*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1994.
- Trépanier, Peter, *The Sixties at the National Gallery of Canada*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2005.
- . *Leiber and Sullivan*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2012. Exhibition brochure.
- Welsh, Robert P. “Acknowledgements.” In *Piet Mondrian 1872–1944*, n.p. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1966. Exhibition catalogue.
- Whitelaw, Ann, Brian Foss, and Sandra Paikowsky. *The Visual Arts in Canada: The Twentieth Century*. Oxford and Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- III. American Art, Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Minimalism**
- General – American Art**
- Carbone, Teresa and Kellie Jones, eds. *Witness: Art and Civil Rights in the Sixties*. New York: Monacelli Press and Brooklyn Museum, 2014. Exhibition catalogue.
- Carroll, Leanne. “Artist-Writers: From Abstract-Expressionist Hostility to 1960s Canonicity.” *RACAR* XXXVIII 1 (2013): 45–53.
- Cohen-Solal, Annie. *Leo and his Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.
- Foster, Hal, et al. *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2004.
- . *Discussions in Contemporary Culture*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1987.
- Guilbault, Serge. *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Johnson, Ellen H. *Modern Art and the Object: A Century of Changing Attitudes*. New York: Harper Collins, 1995.
- Taylor, Robert. “Painting and Sculpture.” In *The Book of Knowledge Annual 1969*, edited by William Shapiro, 258. New York: Grolier Society, 1969.

Pop Art and Rosenquist

Adamson, Jeremy. "Ottawa: James Rosenquist at the National Gallery of Canada." *artscanada* XXV, no. 116/117 (April 1968): 45.

Adcock, Craig. "James Rosenquist and Pop Art." In *James Rosenquist, 191–95*. Valencia: IVAM Centre Julio Gonzalez, c. 1991. Exhibition Catalogue.

Goldman, Judith. *James Rosenquist*. New York: Viking-Penguin, 1985.

Hopps, Walter and Sarah Bancroft, eds. *James Rosenquist: A Retrospective*. New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 2003. Exhibition catalogue.

Lobel, Michael. *James Rosenquist: Pop Art, Politics, and History in the 1960s*. Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2009.

"Painting: Rosenquist and Lichtenstein Are Alive." *Time* (26 January 1968): 64–5.

Rosenquist, James with David Dalton. *Painting Below Zero: Notes on a Life in Art*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009.

Rublowsky, John. *Pop Art*. New York: Basic Books, 1965.

Rothkopf, Scott. "Banned and Determined," Accessed 3 October 2013.
<http://www.mutualart.com/OpenArticle/Banned-and-determined/A6175D5AF77A623E>.

Swenson, Gene. "James Rosenquist: The Figure and Man-Maker." *The Register of the Museum of Art, University of Kansas* IV, nos. 6–7 (24 October–5 December 1971): 53–81.

Tucker, Marcia. *James Rosenquist*. New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1972. Exhibition catalogue.

Tufnell, Ben. *James Rosenquist*. London: Haunch of Venison Gallery, 2006. Exhibition catalogue.

Van der Marck, Jan. "Reminiscing on the Gulf of Mexico: A Conversation with James Rosenquist." *American Art* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 84–107.

Minimalism, Andre, Flavin and Judd

Agee, William C. "Unit, Series, Site: A Judd Lexicon." *Art in America* 63, No. 3 (May-June 1975): 40–49.

Alloway, Lawrence. "Art." *The Nation* (9 February 1970): 155–6.

- Battcock, Gregory, ed. *Minimal Art: a Critical Anthology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Bell, Kristine, Tiffany Bell, and Alexandra Whitney, eds. *Dan Flavin: Series and Progressions*. New York: David Zwirner, 2010. Exhibition catalogue.
- Burnham, Jack. "A Dan Flavin Retrospective in Ottawa." *Artforum* VIII, no. 4 (December 1969): 48–55.
- Colpitt, Frances. *Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989.
- Cooper, Aston, "Posthumous Art on the Market." *Art + Auction* (September 2013): n.p.
- Donald Judd: Drawings 1956–76*. Basel, Halifax and New York: Kunstmuseum Basel, Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, New York University Press, 1976.
- Flavin, Dan "... in daylight or cool white: an autobiographical sketch." *Artforum* IV, no. 4 (December 1965): n.p. Accessed 6 January 2014, <http://artforum.com/inprint/issue=196510&id=34032>.
- Fuchs, Rainer. "Dan Flavin and the Illusions of Minimal Art." In *Dan Flavin Lights*, edited by Rainer Fuchs and Karola Kraus, 9–28. Vienna: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, 2012. Exhibition catalogue.
- Govan, Michael. *Dan Flavin*. New York: DIA Center for the Arts, 1997. Exhibition brochure.
- . and Tiffany Bell, eds. with an Essay by Brydon Smith. *Dan Flavin: A Retrospective*. Washington: Dia Art Foundation with Yale University Press, 2004. Exhibition catalogue.
- Hughes, Robert. "Exquisite Minimalist." *Time* (May 24, 1971): 48–51.
- Jitta, Mariette Josephus. "On Series." In *Donald Judd Prints and Works in Editions*, edited by Mariette Josephus Jitta and Jörg Schellmann, 18–23. Cologne-New York: Edition Schellmann, 1993.
- Judd, Donald. *Complete Writings: 1959–75*. Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975.
- . "The Importance of Permanence." In *Minimalism*, edited by James Meyer, 268. London: Phaidon, 2000. Originally published in *Journal: A Contemporary Art Magazine* (Spring 1982): 18–21.

- . “Some Aspects of Color and Red and Black in Particular (1993).” In *Donald Judd Colorist*, edited by Deitmar Elger, 79–118. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2000.
- . “Specific Objects.” In *Donald Judd: Complete Writings 1959–75*, 181–89. Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975.
- . “Aspects of Dan Flavin’s Work.” In *fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin*, edited by Brydon Smith, 27–8. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1969.
- Fried, Michael. “Art and Objecthood.” *Artforum* V, no. 10 (Summer 1967):12–23.
- Kellein, Thomas. *Donald Judd: The Early Work, 1955–68*. Bielefeld: Kunsthalle Bielefeld, 2002. Exhibition catalogue.
- Kopie, Jeffrey. “Chronology.” In *Donald Judd*, edited by Nicolas Serota, 246–70. London: Tate Publishing, 2004.
- Krauss, Rosalind. “Allusion and Illusion in Donald Judd.” *Artforum* IV, no.9 (May 1966): 24–26.
- Licht, Ira. “Dan Flavin.” *artscanada* XXV, no. 5 (December 1968): 62–4.
- McShine, Kynaston, ed. *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*. New York: Jewish Museum, 1966. Exhibition catalogue.
- Meyer, James. *Minimalism*. London: Phaidon, 2000.
- . *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Neuner, Stefan. “Dan Flavin on the Path to an Ironic-Sublime.” In *Dan Flavin Lights*, edited by Rainer Fuchs and Karola Kraus, 29–62. Vienna: Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, 2012. Exhibition catalogue.
- Paumgarten, Nick. “Profiles: Dealer’s Hand.” *New Yorker* (2 December 2013): 38–51.
- Piranio, Michelle and Jeremy Sigler, eds. *Carl Andre: Sculpture as Place*. New York: Dia Foundation, 2014. Exhibition catalogue.
- Potts, Alex. “‘Dan Flavin: in...Cool White’ and ‘Inflected with Black Magic.’” In *Dan Flavin: New Light*, edited by Jeffrey Weiss, 1–24. Washington and New Haven: Yale University Press and National Gallery of Art, 2006. Exhibition catalogue.

- . *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Raskin, David. *Donald Judd*. London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.
- Serota, Nicolas, ed. *Donald Judd*. London: Tate Publishing, 2004. Exhibition catalogue.
- . “Donald Judd: A Sense of Place.” In *Donald Judd*, edited by Nicolas Serota, 98–113. London: Tate Publishing, 2004. Exhibition catalogue.
- Weiss, Jeffrey, ed. *Dan Flavin: New Light*. New Haven and Washington: Yale University Press and National Gallery of Art, 2006. Exhibition catalogue.
- Abstract Expressionism and Pollock**
- “Accessions of American and Canadian Museums.” *Art Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (Summer 1969): 234.
- Carmean, E. A. “The Church Project: Pollock’s Passion Themes.” *Art in America* 70, no. 6 (Summer 1982): 110–22.
- Cernuschi, Claude. *Jackson Pollock: Meaning and Significance*. New York: Icon Editions, 1992.
- Clark, Timothy J. “Jackson Pollock’s Abstraction.” In *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal, 1945–64*, edited by Serge Guilbault, 172–238. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.
- Harten, Jürgen. *Siqueiros/Pollock: Pollock/Siqueiros*. Dusseldorf: Kunsthalle, 1995. Exhibition Catalogue.
- “Jackson Pollock’s ‘No 29’.” *The Burlington Magazine* 111 (July 1969): 451, 453.
- Kleeblatt, Norman L., ed. *Action/Abstraction: Pollock, de Kooning and American Art, 1940–75*. New York and New Haven: Jewish Museum and Yale University Press, 2008. Exhibition catalogue.
- Krauss, Rosalind. “Contra Carmean.” *Art in America* 70, no. 6 (Summer 1982): 110–22.
- . “Horizontalty.” In *Formless*, edited by Yve-Alain Bois, 93–103. New York: Zone Books, 1997.
- Landau, Ellen G. *Jackson Pollock*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989.

- . and Claude Cernuschi, eds. *Pollock Matters*. Chestnut Hill, MA: McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, 2007.
- Naifeh, Steven and Gregory White Smith. *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga*. Aiken, S.C.: Woodward/White, 1989.
- O'Connor, Francis, ed. *Jackson Pollock: a Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works. Vols. I–IV*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.
- . *Jackson Pollock: a Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works, Supplement 1*. New York: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 1995.
- Rose, Barbara, ed. *Pollock Painting*. New York: Agrinde Publications, 1980.
- Storr, Robert. *Tony Smith: Architect, Painter, Sculptor*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, D.H. Abrams, 1998. Exhibition catalogue.
- Varnedoe, Kirk and Pepe Karmel, eds. *Jackson Pollock*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1998. Exhibition catalogue.
- . *Jackson Pollock: New Approaches*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1998.

IV. Cultural Theory, Curatorial and Museum Studies

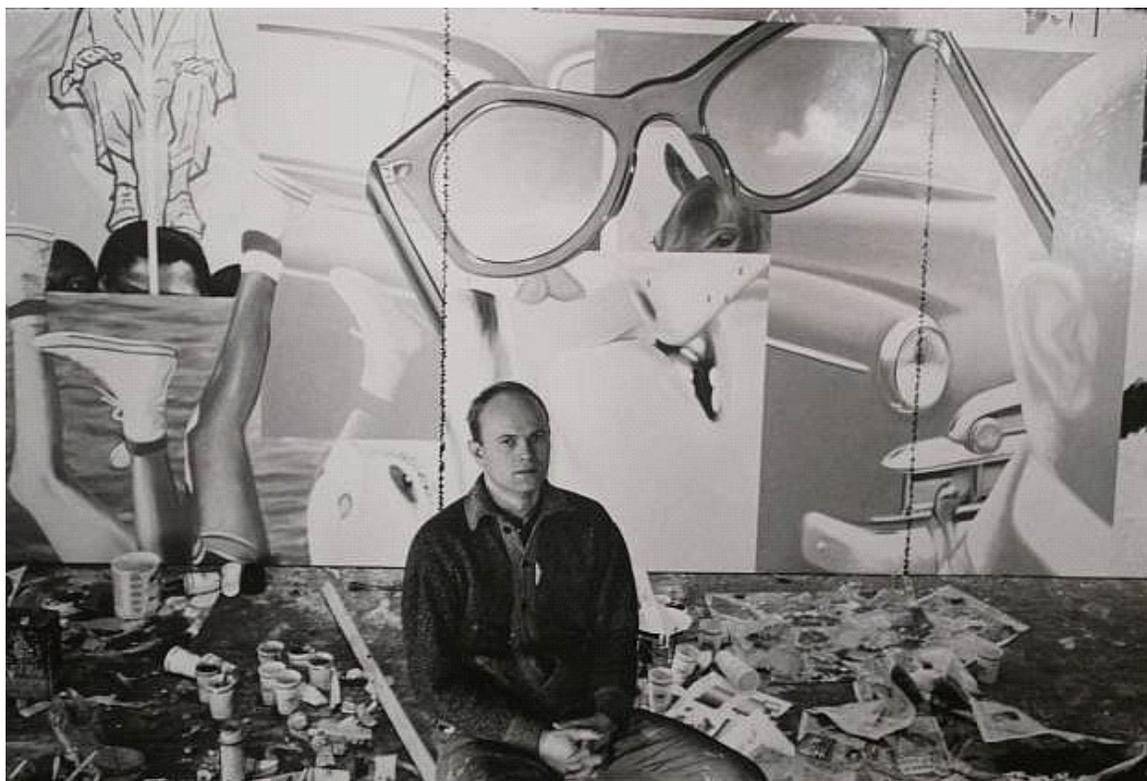
- Alloway, Lawrence. "The Great Curatorial Dim-Out." In *Thinking About Exhibitions*, edited by Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne, 1–11. London and New York: Routledge, 1996. Originally published in *Artforum* XIII, no. 9 (May 1975): 32–4.
- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In *A Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*, edited by Antony Easthope and Kate McGowan, 50–58, 242. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1993.
- Dewdney, Andrew, David Dibosa, and Victoria Walsh. *Post-Critical Museology: Theory and Practice in the Art Museum*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Eddie, James M., ed. *The Primacy of Perception: and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History, and Politics*. Evanston: Northwest University Press, 1964.
- Gleadowe, Teresa. "Reviews." *Art Monthly* 368 (July-August 2013): 38.
- Hooper-Greenhill, Eileen. *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Melville, Stephen. "Phenomenology and the Limits of Hermeneutics." In *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by M.A. Cheetham et al., 143–54. Cambridge, England and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Potts, Alex. "The Phenomenological Turn." In *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 207–234. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000.

Illustrations



Photograph by Fred W. McDarrah, *James Rosenquist, Front Street Studio with Paintings, March 30, 1963*, 8 x 10 inches, vintage gelatin silver print, Steven Kasher Gallery, New York. Copyright (c) and used with the permission of the Estate of Fred W. McDarrah.



Curator Brydon Smith in his office at the Lorne Building with the United Press International photograph of Rosenquist painting a billboard above Times Square, c. 1957–59, reprinted in the NGC catalogue *James Rosenquist*, 14. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



James Rosenquist *Capillary Action II* (1963), 266.7 x 193 x 177.8 cm, irregular; oil, plastic, neon tubing, metal, and wood. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



James Rosenquist's Broome Street studio, New York, 1963 showing sculptures from the same year: *Capillary Action II* in the centre background; *Untitled (Catwalk)* in the centre foreground (destroyed); and *Soapbox Tree* on right (destroyed). Photo reproduced from Walter Hopps and Sarah Bancroft, *James Rosenquist: A Retrospective*, 36. © James Rosenquist / SODRAC, Montreal / VAGA, New York (2014)



Layout of the 1968 Rosenquist exhibition, Lorne Building, showing the sculptures *Capillary Action II* on the left, and *Tumbleweed* (1962-3) on the right. The latter work was loaned from the Castelli Gallery at the time of the exhibition and later entered the collection of Virginia and Bagley Wright. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



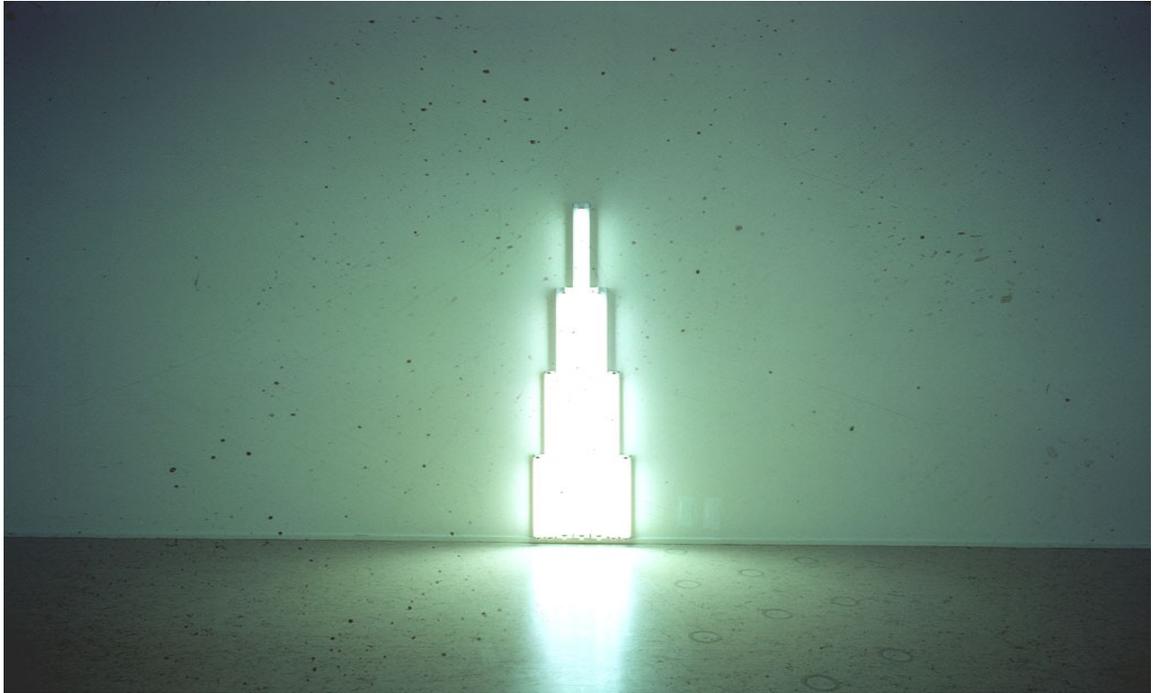
James Rosenquist, Leo Castelli, and Brydon Smith in front of *Capillary Action II* at the 23 January 1968 opening of the NGC's Rosenquist exhibition. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



The Hon. John Turner addresses guests at the opening of the James Rosenquist exhibition, 23 January 1968 with curator Brydon Smith (standing), and Director Jean Boggs and artist James Rosenquist (seated). Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



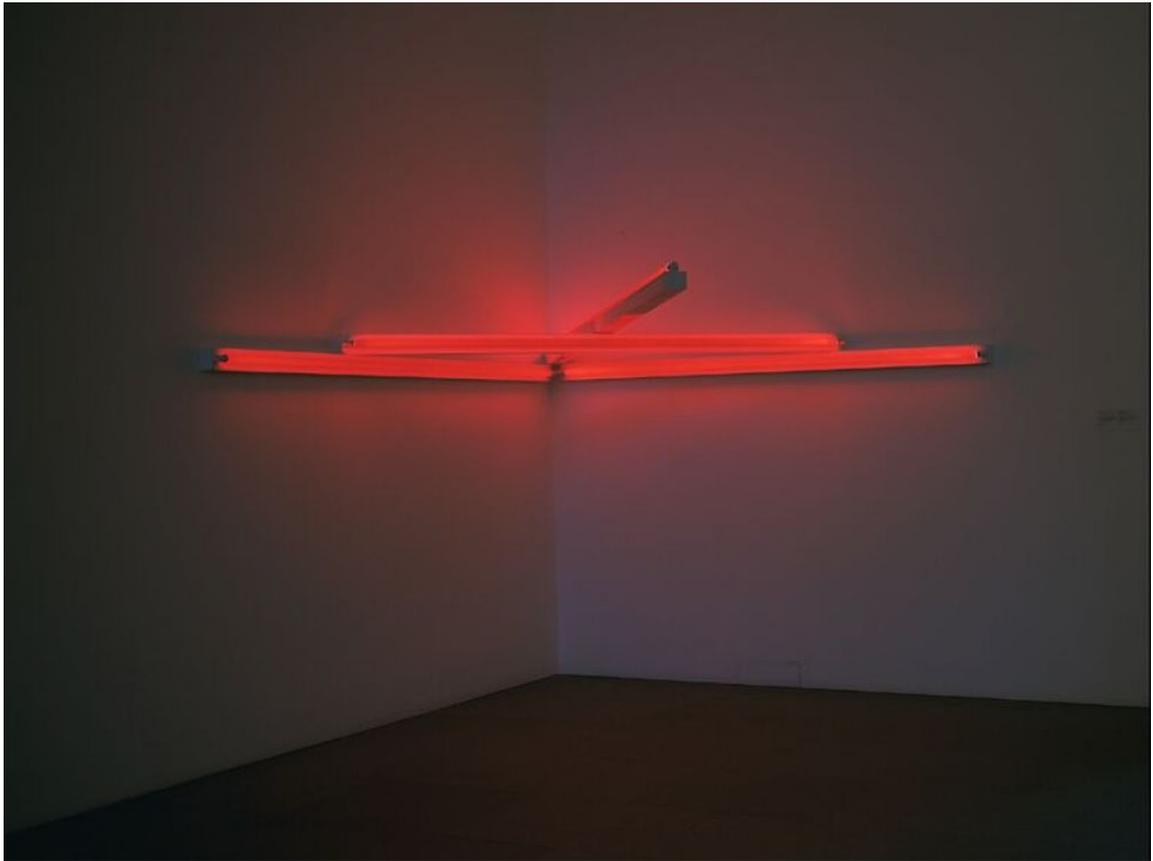
The opening of fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin, 12 September 1969; left to right: Barnett Newman, Dan Flavin, Jean Boggs, and Brydon Smith. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



Dan Flavin, *untitled (to Jane and Brydon Smith)* (1969) (detail), room size: 162 x 331 x 573 in. The artist used daylight, cool white, and blue fluorescent tubes in this work. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



Dan Flavin, *three sets of tangented arcs in daylight and cool white... (to Jennie and Ira Licht)*, (1969), Room size: 114 x 296 x 447 in. Art historian Ira Licht had questioned the lack of curvilinear lines in Flavin's previous installations. The work used daylight and cool white fluorescent tubes, in tangentially paired sets and lighted in opposite shades of white. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



Dan Flavin, *monument 4 for those who have been killed in ambush (to P.K. who reminded me about death)* (1966), 166.4 x 345.4 cm., installed in corner, 166.4 cm off the floor, red fluorescent light, purchased 1969. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



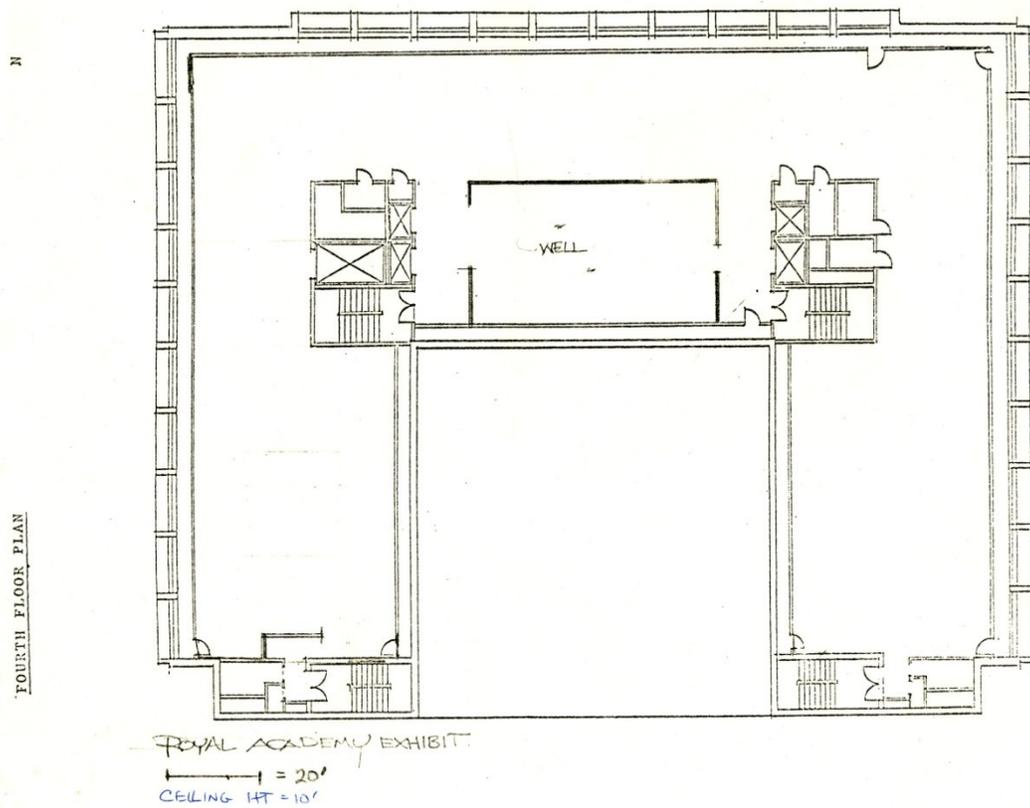
Donald Judd, Jean Boggs, and Brydon Smith at the opening of the Judd retrospective on 23 May 1975. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



The fourth-floor installation at the Lorne Building of the cadmium-red floor sculptures done for the 1975 Donald Judd retrospective. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



For the 1975 Judd exhibition, Smith and the artist installed six square, open-ended plywood boxes facing an equal number of open parallelogram-based boxes with unequal angles (rhomboids) which had been purchased by the NGC in 1973. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



Lorne Building floor plan, fourth floor, showing exhibition spaces and the central well area. Photograph used with the permission of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives.



Brydon Smith, laureate (Outstanding Contribution) of the 2014 Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media. Photograph used with the permission of the Canada Council for the Arts/Martin Lipman.

Appendix I

Major Acquisitions Attributed to Brydon E. Smith (1964-99)

This list was compiled from the NGC's *Annual Reviews*, NGC web site and MYMSYS data base, and the Minutes of the Visiting Committee. The list includes only a few examples of the many works on paper acquired by Smith and in these cases the medium is indicated e.g. lithograph.

I. American

1960s

1. Andy Warhol, *Brillo Soap Pads Boxes* (1964), purchased 1967
 2. James Rosenquist, *Capillary Action II* (1963), purchased 1967
 3. James Rosenquist, *Painting for the American Negro* (1962-3), purchased 1967
 4. Robert Rauschenberg, *Booster* (1967), lithograph, purchased 1967
 5. Les Levine, *Star Machine* (1966), purchased 1967
-
6. Claes Oldenburg, *London Knees* (1966), purchased 1968
 7. Jules Olitski, *DD* (1968), purchased 1968
 8. Tony Smith, *Black Box* (1969-72), purchased 1968
 9. Jackson Pollock, *No. 29, 1950*, purchased 1968
 10. Robert Rauschenberg, *Shades* (1964), lithographs on Plexiglas with electric light, purchased 1968
 11. Richard Tuttle, *Untitled* (1968), purchased 1968
 12. George Segal, *The Gas Station* (1963), purchased 1968
 13. David Smith, *Wagon I* (1963-64), purchased 1968
 14. Robert Morris, *Untitled* (1967-8) (254 pieces of felt), purchased 1968
 15. Les Levine, *LXVI* (1965-66), portfolio of 31 lithographs, purchased 1968

16. Arthur Dove, *Rising Tide* (1944), donated in 1968 by Dorothy Meigs Eidlitz, St. Andrews, N.B.
17. Lyonel Feininger, *Yachts* (1950), donated in 1968 by Dorothy Meigs Eidlitz, St. Andrews, N.B.
18. Charles Sheeler, *Wings II* (1949), donated in 1968 by Dorothy Meigs Eidlitz, St. Andrews, N.B.

-
19. Nancy Graves, *Camel VI, VII and VIII* (1968-9), one purchased and two donated in 1969 by Allan Bronfman, Montreal
 20. Carl Andre, *Lever* (1966), purchased 1969
 21. Carl Andre, *144 Copper Square* (1969), purchased 1969
 22. Dan Flavin, *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* (1963), reconstructed and purchased 1969
 23. Dan Flavin, *monument 4 for those killed in ambush (to P.K. who reminded me about death)* (1966), reconstructed and purchased 1969
 24. Dan Flavin, *icon IV (the pure land) (to David John Flavin [1933-1962])* (1962), reconstructed and purchased 1969
 25. Frank Stella, *Star of Persia I and II* (1967), colour lithograph, acquired in 1969.

1970s

26. Kenneth Noland, *Untitled* (1967-70), donated in 1970 by Mr. and Mrs. David Mirvish, Toronto
 27. Fred Sandback, *Untitled (one of four diagonals)* (1970), purchased 1970
 28. Richard Serra, *Davidson Gate* (1970), donated in 1970 by Mr. and Mrs. Roger Davidson, Toronto
 29. Les Levine, *Iris Print-out Portrait* (1969), offset photolithograph, purchased 1970
-
30. Charles Close, *Study for Richard* (1969), drawing, purchased 1971
 31. Arshile Gorky, *Charred Beloved II* (1946), purchased 1971

32. Brice Marden, *3 Deliberate Greys for Jasper Johns* (1970), purchased 1971
33. Claes Oldenburg, *Giant Ice Bag – Cross Section View I, W.E.D.* (1969), purchased 1971
34. Sol Lewitt, *Series 2, Nos. 1 to 5* (1970), drawings on Bristol board, purchased 1971
35. Les Levine, *Wiretap* (1970), sound installation, purchased 1971

-
36. Nancy Graves, *Variability and Repetition of Variable Forms* (1971), purchased 1972
 37. Brice Marden, *Ten Days, 1971* (1972), portfolio of eight etchings, purchased 1972
 38. Robert Watts, *Henri Matisse* (1966), purchased 1972
 39. Joseph Kosuth, *The Eighth Investigation (A.A.I.A.I.) Proposition Five* (1971), purchased 1972

-
40. Andy Warhol, *Mao Tse-tung* (1972), 10 serigraphs, purchased 1973
 41. Clyfford Still, *1949-G* (1949), purchased 1973
 42. Joseph Cornell, *The Hotel Eden* (1945), purchased 1973
 43. Joseph Kosuth, *One and Three Tables* (1965), purchased 1973
 44. Joseph Kosuth, *Titled (Art as Idea as Idea)* (1966–73), photostat blow-up, purchased 1973
 45. Joseph Kosuth, *The Eighth Investigation (Art as Idea as Idea) Proposition Five* (1971), installation piece, purchased 1973
 46. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1973), five plywood rhomboids, purchased 1973
 47. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1973), brass and wood with red enamel paint, purchased 1973
 48. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (c. 1961–69), series of 9 woodcuts in red on polyester web paper, purchased 1973
-

49. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1960), oil on canvas, purchased 1974
50. Claes Oldenburg, *Bedroom Ensemble* (1963), purchased 1974
51. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1963), light cadmium red oil on wood, purchased 1974
52. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1964), brass and galvanized iron with blue lacquer, purchased 1974
53. Les Levine, *Language (divided by) Emotion + Syntax = Message* (1974), photo-etching, purchased 1974
54. Les Levine, *Peggy's Cove YRBB* (1973), colour photolithograph, purchased 1974
-
55. Joseph Albers, *Homage to the Square: Stepped Foliage* (1963), donated in 1975 by J. Ronald Longstaffe, Vancouver
56. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1966, reconstructed 1975), galvanized iron stacks, purchased 1975
57. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1963, reconstructed 1975), light cadmium-red oil on wood with metal lathe, purchased 1975
58. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1963, second example 1975), light cadmium red oil on wood and purple lacquer on aluminum, purchased 1975
-
59. Ted Victoria, *Water Meander* (1976), purchased 1976
60. Douglas Huebler, *Variable Piece No. 70 (In Process) May 10, 1976*, silver gelatin prints with written and typewritten texts, mounted on card, purchased 1976
-
61. Alexander Calder, *Jacaranda* (1949), purchased 1977
62. Barnett Newman, *The Way I* (1951), purchased 1977
-
63. Hans Haacke, *Condensation Cube* (1963-65), purchased 1978
64. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1978), progression in clear and green anodized aluminum, purchased with a contribution from the artist 1978
65. Barnett Newman, *Here II* (1965), purchased 1978

66. Carl Andre, *Pile* (1977), purchased 1978
67. Milton Resnick, *Saturn* (1976), purchased 1978

1980s

68. Dan Flavin, *untitled (to Helene) 2* (1979), purchased 1982
69. Claes Oldenburg, *Proposal for a Monument to the Survival of the University of El Salvador: Blasted Pencil (Which Still Writes)* (1983), purchased 1985
70. Carl Andre, *Caiman* (1982), purchased 1985
71. Bruce Nauman, *Untitled* (1973), coloured pencil and graphite on calendered wove paper, donated in 1986 by Ernsting, Montreal.
72. Dan Flavin, *of March 17, 1964 in cool white* (31 May 1966), white pencil on black rag paper, purchased 1987
73. Milton Resnick, *That Elephant* (1979), anonymous donation in 1988 through the American Federation of Arts in 1988 “in recognition of the conservation performed by Marion Barclay, Senior Conservator of Paintings.” (email from Marion Barclay 13 January 2014)
74. Barnett Newman, *Voice of Fire* (1967), purchased 1989 from unallocated acquisition Funds

1990s

75. Barnett Newman, *Yellow Edge* (c. 1968), donated in 1990 by Annalee Newman, New York
76. Mark Rothko, *No. 16* (1957), purchased in 1993 from unallocated acquisition funds
77. Dan Flavin, *untitled (in honor of Leo at the 30th anniversary of his gallery)* (1987), donated by the artist in 1994
78. Agnes Martin, *White Flower I* (1985), purchased 1995
79. O’Keeffe, Georgia, *Lake George with Crows* (1921), donated in 1995 by the Georgia O’Keeffe Foundation, Abiquiu, New Mexico
80. Frank Stella, *Firuzabad (Variation) I* (1970), purchased 1997

81. Donald Judd, *Untitled* (1971), stainless steel with dark-brown Plexiglas, donated in 1998 by Claude Toussignant, Montreal

82. Les Levine, *Disposables* (1966), donated in 1997 by Jeanne Parkin, Toronto

II. European Works:

1. Marcel Duchamp, *Boîte-en-valise* (1941-59), purchased 1967

2. Karel Appel, *Big Ear* (1967), exchanged in 1970 for an earlier work titled *H. Lazard* (1956)

3. Piet Mondrian *Composition* (1936-42), purchased 1970 through a de-acquisition by MOMA

4. Marcel Duchamp *Readymades* (artist authorized reproduction, set of 13), purchased 1971

5. Gilles Aillaud, *Crocodile in the Bronx Zoo* (1972), purchased 1972

6. Gérard Gasiorowski, *The Last Landscape* (1971), purchased 1972

7. Gérard Gasiorowski, *The Top of Cheurli* (1971), purchased 1972

8. Gérard Gasiorowski, *Flore Sanréal 1911-1930, Clarisse Sanréal 1913-1943* (1971), purchased 1972

9. Takis, *Indicator: Time to Go* (1969), purchased 1972

10. Marcel Duchamp *Red Nude* (1910), purchased 1973

11. Joseph Beuys, *Sled* (1969), purchased 1973

12. Barry Flanagan, *Rope 8, 1968/SER1969*, donated in 1973 by the Contemporary Art Society, London, England

13. El Lissitzky, *Proun 8 Stellungen* (c. 1923), purchased 1973

14. Gerhard Richter, *Cloud* (1970), purchased 1973

15. Salvador Dali, *Gala and the Angelus of Millet immediately preceding the arrival of the conic anamorphoses* (1933), purchased 1975

16. Oskar Kokoschka, *Portrait of John G. McConnell* (1973), donated in 1976 by Elspeth B. McConnell, Montreal

17. Paul Klee, *Angst* (1934), purchased 1979
18. Georges Braque, *The Glass of Absinthe* (1910-11), purchased 1981
19. Francis Picabia, *Paroxysm of Pain* (1915) ink and metallic paint on cardboard, purchased 1982
20. René Magritte, *Perspective: Madame Récamier by David* (1951), purchased 1997

III. Canadian and American Acquisitions at the Art Gallery of Ontario (1964-67)

Sources: Marilyn Nazar, AGO Library and Archives; Adam Welch, Ph.D. candidate, University of Toronto, who prepared a file on Smith for his successful nomination for the Governor General's Visual Arts Award.

Morris Louis, *Lambda* (1960-61)

Claes Oldenburg, *Giant Hamburger* (1962), retitled *Floor Burger*

Kenneth Lochhead, *Untitled (No. 55)* (1963)

Joyce Wieland, *Boat Tragedy* (1964)

Andy Warhol, *Elvis I and II* (1964)

Frank Stella, *Ossippee* (1965)

Harold Town, *Great Divide* (1965)

George Segal, *The Butcher Shop* (1965)

Jack Bush, *Dazzle Red* (1965)

Jim Dine, *Black Bathroom 2* (1962), donated in 1966

Robert Rauschenberg, *Breakthrough No. 2* (1966)

Appendix II – Exhibitions Curated, Coordinated and Organized by Brydon E. Smith
(1964–2009)

1. At AGO

Source: *RACAR* (VII/1-2) 84

17 October to 15 November 1964. Canaletto, Smith credited in catalogue with general assistance to the Director and Curator.

13 February to 14 March 1965. Cartoons by Duncan Macpherson.

12 February to 20 March 1966. Piet Mondrian, Smith assisted Curator Robert Welsh.

23 September to 23 October 1966. Slipcover: A Place by Les Levine.

14 January to 12 February 1967. Dine, Oldenburg, Segal: Paintings/Sculpture

2. At the NGC

Sources: For 1967–80 see: Gary Mainprize, “The National Gallery of Canada: A Hundred Years of Exhibitions,” *RACAR* (XI 1–2 1984): 52–77

For the period after 1980 see: NGC Library and Archives online catalogue:
<http://bibcat.gallery.ca/screens/opacmenu.html>

Curriculum Vitae, August 1982 in box 11, file 3 Personal – Employment and job seeking (1968–93), Brydon Smith fonds, NGC Library and Archives

Exhibition 1280: 12 January to 20 October 1968. Canada, art d’aujourd’hui, shown in Paris, Rome, Lausanne, and Brussels. Smith served on the Comité de Sélection with Jean-René Ostiguy, Pierre Théberge, Dennis Reid, and Joanna Woods Marsden. He drafted five of the nineteen entries.

Exhibition 1281: 24 January to February 25 1968. James Rosenquist.

Exhibition 1339: 28 April to 6 July 1968. Contemporary American and British Prints, with Pamela Osler Delworth.

Exhibition 1294: 22 June to 20 October 1968. Ulysse Comtois, Guido Molinari, for the XXXIV Venice Biennale, Commissioner for the exhibition Brydon Smith, Commissioner for Canada Joanna Woods Marsden.

Exhibition 1349: 1 September 1969 to 15 May 1970, William Blake 1757–1827, sent to Regina, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Halifax, Sackville, St. John’s. An exhibition of prints organized by Mary Cazort Taylor. The exhibition was prepared under the supervision of Brydon Smith and Pamela Osler, Acting Curator of Prints.

- Exhibition 1353: 13 September to 19 October 1969, fluorescent light, etc. from Dan Flavin.
- Exhibition 1355: 23 September 1969 to 8 January 1970. Robert Murray, for the Xth Bienal de São Paulo.
- Exhibition 1386: 24 June to 31 October 1970. Michael Snow, for XXXV Venice Biennale.
- Exhibition 1394: 3 September to 4 October 1970. Prints by Richard Hamilton.
- Exhibition cancelled: December 1970, Sculpture as Place: Carl André, curated by Diane Waldman, Guggenheim Museum, N.Y.
- Exhibition 1424: 2 September to 31 October 1971. Shaman by Nancy Graves; an environment of hangings by the artist.
- Exhibition 1450: 5 May 1972 to 23 April 1973. Readymades Etc. by Marcel Duchamp.
- Exhibition 1453: June 11 to October 10 1972. Gerson Iskowitz, Walter Redinger, for the XXXVI Venice Biennale.
- Exhibition 1473: 19 January to 27 May 1973. Variability and Repetition of Variable Forms by Nancy Graves.
- Exhibition 1483: 5 July to 3 September 1973. Boucherville-Montreal-Toronto-London, with Pierre Théberge. Included art by Jean-Marie Delavalle, Henry Saxe, Robin Collyer, James. B. Spencer, Murray Favro, and Ron Martin.
- Exhibition 1530: 24 May to 6 July 1975. Donald Judd.
- Exhibition 1551: 3 February to 4 April 1976. Sir Stanley Spencer, 1891–1959, with Monique Baker.
- Exhibition 1645: 17 August to 14 October 1979. ‘Cuts’ by Carl Andre, with Jessica Bradley.
- Exhibition 1650: 16 October 1979 to 20 April 1980. Readymades Etc. by Marcel Duchamp.
- Exhibition 1653: 5 December 1979 to 3 March 1980. An installation in fluorescent light by Dan Flavin.

Exhibition 1660: 1 June to 28 September 1980. Canada Video: Colin Campbell, Pierre Falardeau/Julian Poulin, General Idea, Tom Sherman, Lisa Steele, for XXXIX Venice Biennale, organized by Bruce Ferguson and coordinated by Brydon Smith.

Exhibition 1694: 8 June to 8 August 1982. Hiroshima: Drawings by Survivors, organized by Brydon Smith and coordinated by Williard Holmes.

Exhibition 1696: 8 July to 6 September 1982. Art of the avant-garde in Russia: Selections from the George Costakis Collection, coordinated by Michael Pantazzi and Brydon Smith.

Mr. Costakis, a former locally-engaged employee of the Canadian Embassy in Moscow, built his collection of avant-garde Russian art when it was in official Soviet disfavour. When he retired and left Russia, Costakis negotiated to retain a part of his collection which was shown here. These works were exhibited previously in Dusseldorf (1977) and at the Guggenheim, New York (1981).

Exhibition 1888A: 1 December 1995 to 17 March 1996. M.C. Escher: Landscapes to Mindscapes.

Exhibition 1955: 8 October 1998 to 17 January 1999. MC Escher (1898–1972): A Celebration.

Exhibition 1996: 4 February to 4 June 2000. The Great War at Home and Abroad in conjunction with Canvas of War: Masterpieces from the Canadian War Museum shown at the Canadian Museum of Civilization 11 February 2000 to 7 January 2001.

Prior to retiring, Smith ensured that all the NGC's important war art was restored and that the NGC was available to host the exhibition. The NGC's interest was instrumental in getting the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) to offer its own space. The exhibition's Curator noted that 480,000 persons viewed the exhibition at the CMC establishing the profile of the War Museum collection. She credited Smith for establishing the necessary momentum. (Email from Dr. Laura Brandon to Ann Thomas of March 6, 2014 and <https://www.gallery.ca/en/about/464.php>)

3. [At the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas](#)

Source: http://www.cuttsgallery.com/dynamic/artist_cv.asp?artistid=21

1995/96: Voice Box, Off-Whites, Ron Martin Bottled and Jarred 1993

4. [At Carleton University Art Gallery](http://cuag.carleton.ca/index.php/exhibitions/11) (Source: <http://cuag.carleton.ca/index.php/exhibitions/11>)

17 November 2008 to 8 February 2009: Ron Martin, Behind the Scenes: Works of Art on Paper