Translating Religious Heritage: Selection Issues at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Seminar Movable Religious Heritage
museum Catharijneconvent Utrecht
4-5 November 2013

Jacques Des Rochers
Curator of Quebec and Canadian Art
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master of the Legend of Saint Barbara</th>
<th>Andrea Mantegna</th>
<th>Jan Steen</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active in Brussels, about 1470-about 1500</td>
<td>Padua 1431 - Mantua 1506</td>
<td>Leiden 1626 – Leiden 1679</td>
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<td>Virgin Enthroned with Angels</td>
<td>Judith with the Head of Holofernes</td>
<td>The Return of the Prodigal Son</td>
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<td>About 1490</td>
<td>About 1500</td>
<td>About 1668-1670</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Tempera and gold on linen canvas</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gift of Dr. Max Stern 1986.14</td>
<td>Purchase, John W. Tempest Fund 1920.103</td>
<td>Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Michal Hornstein 2012.48</td>
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</tbody>
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John A. Fraser
London 1838 - New York 1898
After a photography by William Notman

Bishop Francis Fulford
1865
Anglican Diocese of Montreal
Salomon Marion
Lachenaie 1782 - Montreal 1830

Processional Cross
About 1820
Silver
Purchase, Gift of Miss Mabel Molson 1938.Ds2

Paul Lambert, known as Saint-Paul
Arras, France, 1691 or 1703 - Quebec City 1749

Processional Cross Staff
From the parish of Saint-Pierre, Île d'Orléans
1746
Silver
MBAM, Gift of Henry Birks & Son Ltd
1953.Ds3
Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in 1885 and since the 1920s.

Louis-Philippe Hébert
Sainte-Sophie-d'Halifax 1850 - Westmount (Quebec) 1917

Saint Philomena
1898
Painted wood
Gift of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
1973.2
Philippe Liébert
Nemours (France) 1732 - Montréal 1804
Sacred Heart Altar, the Grey Nuns of Montreal’s General Hospital
1790
Polychromed and gilded wood
Gift of Concordia University in honour of the legacy of the Sisters of Charity of Montreal, "Grey Nuns" MBAM.2009.14
Attributed to the Écores Workshop
Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (Quebec) 1792-1830

Père Éternel Altar, the Grey Nuns of Montreal’s General Hospital
About 1795
Polychromed and gilded wood
Collection of the Grey Nuns

Remains of the original Chapel of the first General Hospital and the actual one built in the 1860s.
Research report commissioned by the Quebec Ministry of Culture and Communications on the protection of movable religious heritage in the diocese of Montreal (2001)
Attributed to the Levasseur Workshop
Quebec city, 1651/1654-1794

Reliquary of Saint John, Bishop and Martyr, and of Saint Martir
1716
Gilded and polychromed wood, glass, nails, cloth, sealing wax
Long-term loan, Corporation Archiépiscopale catholique romaine de Montréal 105.2004

Anonymous
Quebec city area
Bracket
About 1700-1750
Gilded wood
MBAM, purchased in 1949
Windows on the past

‗Lost‘ stained glass now at museum

ALAN HUSTAK
The Gazette

Eight stained-glass windows that were once discarded by St. Patrick’s Basilica as being too simple are now on display as treasures at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

The windows were boarded up in the the walls of the sanctuary behind the high altar for almost a century until they were discovered by accident in 1991 when the church on René Lévesque Blvd. was being restored.

At the time it was thought they had been manufactured in France. Research revealed, however, that they are among the first stained-glass windows to be produced in Canada.

They were made in Montreal by the Grey Nuns under the guidance of Sister Adine Desjardins. Remarkably, Desjardins had no formal training in art, painting or stained glass.

Three of the windows depict scenes from the Bible – the return of the prodigal son, Christ teaching children and Christ’s entry into Jerusalem – and one shows St. Thomas.

The other four, produced in bright primary colours, are decorative. The windows were made for the church when it was built in 1847.

By the 1890s, the windows were considered too unsophisticated for the church. New windows were acquired from a New York designer and the rector tried to get rid of the old glass. A newspaper ad from the period offered "Stained Glass for Sale, Cheap."

The church couldn’t sell them, so when the sanctuary was redesigned, the windows were simply boarded up.

Detlef and Gaby Gotzens, who work for Andet Glassform and Design Inc., restored the windows in 1993 at a cost of $50,000. But the basilica had no appropriate place to display them.

"Guy Cogevial (director of the fine-arts museum) saw the windows a year ago and immediately recognized their artistic and historic importance," said Mary McGovern, the basilica’s business manager.

“He felt they would enrich the museum’s decorative-arts collection. The museum’s acquisitions committee and our board of wardens agreed, and we arranged a long-term loan so everyone can appreciate them.”

The windows are on display in the Liliane and David M. Stewart Gallery in the museum’s Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion, 1379 Sherbrooke St. W. There is no admission charge to enter the pavilion.

Alan Hustak’s E-mail address is ahustak@thegazette.southam.ca.

The stained-glass window above and seven others are at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.
Workshop of the Grey Nuns of Montreal
Strained-glass, glass, wood, 1861-1863
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
On deposit by the Saint-Patrick’s Basilica in 2002
Louis Comfort Tiffany Workshop: Nativity (1901); The Good Shepherd (1897); Christ at Emmaus (1897).
Exhibition *The Montreal Sulpicians. 350 years of Artistic Legacy*

Fall 2007

«Cutaway» view of the nave
New Claire and Marc Bourgie Pavilion of Quebec and Canadian Art, 2011.

Virtual elevation and axonometric projections, 2011.
Claude François, called Frère Luc.
Amiens 1614 - Paris 1685.

*The Virgin Embracing Christ and the Reed*.
Before 1670. Oil on copper.
Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest. MBAM. 2007.360
François Ranvoyzé
Quebec city 1739 – Quebec city 1819

Ciborium
Silvère, silver gilt
Weight: 643 g

On loan from the Saint Roch des Aulnaies parish corporation thanks to the kind assistance of the Honourable Serge Joyal, P.C., O.C.
Design of the exhibit on early encounters with Native peoples and on the arts in New France
Kent Monkman  
Born in Saint Marys, Ontario, in 1965  
*The King's Beavers*  
2011  
Acrylic on canvas  
Gift of the artist and W. Bruce C. Bailey 2011.401

NEW BRUNSWICK or NOVA SCOTIA (CANADA)  
Mi'kmaq, possibly Maliseet  
Box  
1830s-1840s  
Bark, spruce root, porcupine quill (or moosehair?), wood  
Purchase, Deirdre M. Stevenson Fund 2011.23.1-2