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Gerta Moray. *Unsettling Encounters: First Nations Imagery in the Art of Emily Carr*. Vancouver: UBC Press; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006. 386 pp. Illustrations. Bibliographic essay. Index. \$75.00 hc.

Donald Ellis, ed. *Tsimshian Treasures: The Remarkable Journey of the Dundas Collection*. Dundas, ON: Donald Ellis Gallery; Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007. 144 pp. Illustrations. Bibliography. \$55.00 hc.

Charles C. Hill, Johanne Lamoureux, Ian M. Thom, curators. Essays by Jay Steward and Peter Macnair et al. *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon*. Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2006. 336 pp. Illustrations. Works in the Exhibition. Bibliography. \$75.00 hc.

Unsettling Encounters: First Nations Imagery in the Art of Emily Carr evolves out of Gerta Moray's doctoral dissertation, "Northwest Coast Native Culture and the Early Indian Paintings of Emily Carr, 1899-1913" (University of Toronto, 1993). Marcia Crosby, a writer and historian of Tsimshian and Haida ancestry — as well as the grand-daughter of Clara and William Russ, whose portraits Carr painted in 1928 — wrote the foreword. The Russes were, as Crosby notes, Carr's "guides in 1912 to some of the Haida villages, the people she fictively named 'Jimmie and Louise,' each story titled by the names of places where they'd taken her to paint: 'Tampp,' 'Skedans,' and 'Cumshewa'" (vi). They were also her hosts sixteen years later when she returned on a second northern expedition to paint in Haida Gwaii (vi). Carr wrote to Marius Barbeau in 1928 about her intended trip, "I want to get back, even if the poles are all gone I want to get the feel of the places again" (291).

The choice of Crosby to write a foreword for Moray's book is symptomatic of

our times. It is a respectful response to sentiments, which Crosby voices, that aboriginal memories and perspectives are not foregrounded sufficiently in the telling of Canadian history/art history:

Whether the questions Moray raises in her book will bring its readers closer to listening to First Nations' viewpoints about colonial history or Carr remains to be seen. But through Moray's text, I recognize Carr more clearly in a context I know and understand: race relations and the colonial and patriarchal history of British Columbia and Canada (vi).

Moray herself pays tribute to E.S. Said when she observes that he "has opened up a rich vein of exploration, showing how literary, scholarly, and political discourse on non-western cultures obeyed the thought structures, wishes and fantasies of the dominant West" (3, 5).

Moray divides her book into three parts. In part 1 she traces the course of white settlement along the British Columbia coast and its consequences for aboriginal peoples. She also explains the Victoria and Vancouver context in which Carr's life was lived, as well as Carr's own family history. Repeatedly Moray feels obliged to forgive Carr for what today must be seen as patronizing attitudes — among them, her belief that by recording the Indian totems she was somehow rescuing a "dying" culture. Nevertheless, Moray maintains repeatedly that Carr was more sensitive than her contemporaries to the plight of Aboriginal peoples and decidedly more appreciative of their artistic production. Such claims are made on the basis of limited and even questionable evidence. For example, Moray tells us that Carr went on her painting and sketching adventures without benefit of a camera. One really must question Carr's wisdom here, and ask Moray if this is truly evidence of cultural sensitivity, as she implies, or a bad idea on the part of someone who conscientiously wants to record Indian totems? In fact, as Moray subsequently tells us, Carr relied on others' photographs from time to time as visual guidelines for some of her paintings. Carr also appropriated Indian designs for her own pottery which she sold as tourist trinkets. Carr's statement that Aboriginal art is better seen in place than in a museum is, I think, given undue significance, and is part of Moray's attempts to paint Carr as a more enlightened thinker than she was. Moray quotes extensively, but selectively, from Carr's hard to find 1913 "Lecture on Totems." This document, if included in its entirety, would have been a valuable addendum to Moray's book, as Carr's subsequent recollections of this early period are generally acknowledged to be romanticized and even fictionalized. It is not just in her attitudes towards the Aboriginal peoples, however, that Moray portrays Carr as being on a higher moral plane. In the ongoing class struggle, for example, Carr is portrayed as being superior to Victorian painters Sophie Pemberton and Josephine Crease because Carr was of a lower class.

The tropes of modernism also figure prominently in Moray's story. In part 2

Moray focuses on Carr's paintings from the pre-World War I years and finds important modernist masterpieces among these generally less-highly-regarded works. Indeed, throughout her book, Moray casts Carr as a combatant in ongoing modernist wars. Moray applauds Carr's superior modernist approach against, for example, a "decorative" Langdon Kihn. She also complains that the photographer and filmmaker Edward Curtis was aesthetically manipulating his prints. It is an odd criticism especially in light of the kudos she awards Carr in part 2 for doing the very same thing. Mind you, Curtis was not seeing things through the preferred lens of post-impressionism. Curtis was funded by J.P. Morgan, Moray feels obliged to mention, though only in passing. Moray also applauds what she sees as Carr's early nationalist sympathies which are evidenced through her desire to portray British Columbia subjects. In Moray's judgmental universe, British feminist art historian Griselda Pollock is also invoked to cast a shadow on both Pemberton and Crease, who not only did not embrace modernism but, according to Moray, "did not violate the proprieties requested of their gender, did not risk the unsexing that threatened the vanguard woman artist" (32). In part 3, Moray returns to an even more complex feminist reading when she explores Carr's allegedly traumatic childhood and discusses her psychic evolution within a predictable Freudian framework. Oddly, the Group of Seven is not castigated as much as one might expect given Moray's tendency to assign blame. She does mention Robert Linsley's observations "that the insistent imagery found in both Housser's and Harris's writings of the whiteness and purity of the Canadian North held echoes...of an ideology of Nordic purity and racial supremacy that had flourished in Anglo-Canada since the 1880s and that was revitalized by the controversies over immigration in the 1920s" (320). Moray does discuss Harris' advice to Carr that she record nature, rather than aboriginal artefacts, as her primary subject matter.

In a book which is chock-full of impressive detail and the unquestioned beneficiary of much time-consuming research, the author seems oblivious to her particular form of Western biases and the various clichés that she is relying on and perpetuating in her account of Carr's life and the examination of her art.

In part 3 Moray continues Carr's story beyond the time frame of Moray's dissertation. In the 1920s Carr made contact with Ottawa, and her art evolved as a result of her exposure to other artistic influences, in particular her growing friendship with Lawren Harris. Carr now becomes a more believable presence, as Moray excerpts quite liberally from Carr's diary entries and other writings which date from these later years. It is hard not to like Carr, to be taken with her gumption and her eccentric charm — as much of the Canadian reading public was impressed in the 1940s when reminiscences of her life among the Aboriginal people and her quest to paint their totems gained widespread national attention. Carr's own less-exclusive

aesthetic, which underlies the formation of a People's Gallery, is an example of Carr's generous spirit both artistically and personally. This seems somehow at odds with Moray's earlier portrayal of the insistent modernist. Why Emily Carr was not asked to become the last member of the Group of Seven when a vacancy came up is not something that Moray brings up. It may be additional support, however, for Moray's contention that Carr was not always promoted as energetically or single-mindedly as some of her male contemporaries, whose nationalistic vision she, nonetheless, embraced wholeheartedly.

Compared to Moray's treatment of Carr, the story of the Dundas Collection and its repatriation to British Columbia is told with less intervention. The ideas and attitudes of settlers and their failure to value Aboriginal customs and beliefs follow a familiar trajectory. How the collection came to be assembled and from whom and how it was returned to the descendants of those who made the objects in the first place is a fascinating story, in which past history intersects with present-day attempts to make amends or at least reach some sort of satisfactory closure. A catalogue of the actual objects in the Dundas Collection is part of this book, which includes both documentary and inspirational photographs of British Columbia scenery and informative essays written by a variety of individuals with interesting and diverse perspectives. One finishes this book not only wiser about the history of the region in which these artefacts were produced, but informed about the changes in attitude within both the Aboriginal communities and the museum world which co-operated in order to show the collection at the Museum of Northern British Columbia in Prince Rupert. The part Sarah Milroy, one of the essay contributors, played in bringing the possible loss of this collection to the attention of Canadians is grabbed from the headlines, but particularly relevant here. As a result of her articles, which appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, private individuals provided the needed money to purchase this collection — thus keeping it together — from Sotheby's auction house. Without private donations, the collection would have been broken up and scattered who knows where.

That the Dundas Collection has a Carr connection is an interesting footnote to this story. Carr's parents belonged to a church that supported William Duncan's missionary activities, and it was Duncan who assembled the artefacts which later came to be known as the Dundas Collection. Duncan's strategy was to move the Aboriginal peoples that he supervised away from their traditional heathen beliefs. Part of that process involved confiscating their ritual objects. Rev. Robert J. Dundas, the Scottish minister into whose possession these artefacts came, kept a diary in which he explained how he and Lieut. Verney acquired the fruits of Duncan's civilizing efforts, when they visited Duncan and the aboriginal village he controlled at Metlatka in October, 1863. Verney's part of the collection was dispersed, but the Dundas collec-

tion remained intact until the auction in 2006. Alan Hoover's essay, "The History of the Dundas Collection," is the historical center of this book, and provides important background not only on the individuals connected to the Dundas Collection and its formation, but on the other collections assembled by earlier visitors to and explorers in the British Columbia region. The Dundas Collection, he points out, is particularly important to those who study Aboriginal artefacts because it is possible not only to date the works, but also to know with certainty their provenance. For the Aboriginal community, the return of the collection had a more emotional and spiritual significance. A representative of the Aboriginal community William White noted at the opening ceremonies to mark the collection's return:

Susan Marsden [the curator] followed the required Tsimshian protocols. The Tsimshian told her they wanted the name of the exhibit to truly reflect what the objects were. In other words, The Dundas Collection wasn't going to satisfy them as the title for the exhibit. She worked with a team of organizers from the museum as well as a group of traditional people from the Tsimshian nation. The exhibit would be named "Nluut'iksa Lagigvedm Ts'msyen" (132).

The catalogue of the recent National Gallery of Canada traveling exhibition, *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon*, is an excellent companion to the two preceding books, and might even be viewed as a second volume of Moray's Carr monograph. In this book/catalogue the essays are written by different authors who look at Carr from a variety of points of view. Moray writes the final essay entitled "Exhibiting Emily Carr: The Making and Remaking of a Canadian Icon." It is a fitting climax for this collection of essays and would have been as comfortable within Moray's Carr monograph as it is appropriate here. Moray's essay is a detailed overview of Carr's exhibition history. It considers the various ways in which her work had been displayed and promoted, primarily after her death and with varying success and acceptance across Canada. Other authors focus on aspects of Carr's life and work, her travel history, her relationship to European art and artists, and her connection to the Canadian landscape in essays whose titles are more or less self-explanatory: "Reconstructing Emily Carr in Alaska" (Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair), "The Other French Modernity of Emily Carr" (Johanne Lamoureux), and "Clear Cut" (Andrew Hunter). The Aboriginal point of view is also represented when Shirley Bear and Susan Crean raise difficult questions about Emily Carr's sensitivity to Aboriginal peoples — in particular her relationship with Sophie Frank — in their essay, "The Presentation of Self in Emily Carr's Writings." Charles C. Hill's "Backgrounds in Canadian Art: The 1927 Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern" expands on the important exhibition that gave new life to Carr's artistic career with an interesting discussion of anthropologist Marius Barbeau and American Indian

painter Langdon Kihn. Barbeau, Kihn, and Carr were all participants in the construction of a national narrative which extended into Aboriginal territory. Marcia Crosby's essay, "In a Chronology of Love's Contingencies," expands on ideas she expressed in her foreword to Moray's monograph. Ian M. Thom's overview of the Carr literature, "Locating Emily Carr: Major Writings on Her Work and Life, 1945-1990," is a useful addendum to Moray's bibliographical essay, which was a short essay at the end of the Carr monograph. Steven C. McNeil's extensive bibliography (with Lynne Brockington) makes this catalogue a particularly important resource for scholars wanting an up-to-date survey of the extensive, evolving, and increasingly challenging Carr literature. This book is also a catalogue for a nationwide Carr exhibition with a good selection of her most highly regarded late works reproduced in colour.

All three of these books are handsome to look at. They are also essential reading not just for what they have to say about Carr and her time, but for what they reveal about our own, as various individuals and groups rethink, repair, and even attempt to change fundamental assumptions about Canada's past through, of course, peaceful means.

MARILYN BAKER is professor and chair of Art History, School of Art, University of Manitoba. She is the author of *Symbol in Stone: The Art and Politics of a Public Building* and *The Winnipeg School of Art: The Early Years*. She has curated exhibitions on Manitoba women artists and on L.L. FitzGerald.